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TO the uninitiated it would seem as if the country which is by far the world's largest gold producer ought to be in no fear of being driven off the gold standard. But this week the Union of South Africa has suspended the obligation of its Central Bank to redeem its notes in gold, and taken control of the foreign exchange situation, just as other countries threatened with the loss of their dwindling gold stocks have been forced to do. There is still a good deal of uncertainty about the real meaning of this decision, and the policy which General Hertzog's Government is intending to pursue. But there is none about the immediate causes which have led the Government to act in haste. For a long time past, General Smuts and the South African Party, backed by the leaders of the exporting trades, including the agriculturists, and by a large body of public opinion, have been pressing for a departure from the gold standard, and the relating of the South African currency to sterling in the interests of the exporters. The Government has attempted to meet the claim by giving bounties on exports, the money being raised by levies on imports. But this has not prevented a severe decline in sales. Last week-end, Mr. Tielman Roos, the leading figure of the Nationalist Party in the Transvaal, who has been out of politics for some time, dramatically broke with General Hertzog, and declared for suspending the gold standard and forming a coalition with General Smuts. This threat to the Hertzog Government was followed by a run on the South African currency by those who feared its imminent depreciation; and this run led the Government to empower the Bank to suspend payment in gold. It does not, however, follow that South Africa will go off gold and on to sterling. That has still to be seen. She may be content to suspend gold exporting as many other countries have done, while remaining on the gold standard in other respects.

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The entire problem is one in which economics and politics are hopelessly mixed up. South Africa, as the greatest gold-producing country, has the strongest interest in the value of gold being high, and therefore in the world being on the gold standard, in order that the bank demand for gold may be maintained. But to remain on the gold standard when her leading customers are off it wrecks her export trade. Nor does it immediately suit the gold-mining interests, which would get more money for their product if the currency were devaluated. The gold-mining interests are for this reason divided between the immediate desire for higher profits and the fear of fouling their own nests. Meanwhile the Hertzog Government, which has hitherto stood for a rigid maintenance of the gold standard, is faced with a serious revolt in its own ranks. Is it to fight, on its own unpopular policy, or to attempt to "dish" General Smuts and Mr. Roos by suddenly adopting their policy as its own? The mere suspension of gold export does not decide this issue; but it may prove impossible for South Africa, having taken the first step, to stop where Germany and most of the distressed nations of Europe have stopped, and remain on the gold standard in the sense of maintaining its currency at par, while refusing to supply gold freely for export. This policy will by no means satisfy the powerful groups which are pressing for currency depreciation in the interests of South African producers for export.

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Mr. Bennett, as we all know, is a hard-headed business man. He nearly broke up the Imperial Conference by insisting on the exclusion of Russian goods from this country if they competed with Canadian goods, just at the time when his Government was sanctioning a large exchange of Canadian aluminium wire for Russian oil and gold. He is now confronted with another hard business proposition. It is authoritatively stated, though not admitted by Mr. Bennett, that a Winnipeg syndicate has arranged an immense bargain with the Soviet Government. If the Government sanctions the deal, 100,000 Canadian cattle and 10,000 tons of beef hides will go to Russia in exchange for petrol, oil products and anthracite. Anthracite is one of the commodities whose importation into Canada is specially forbidden by a very moral Order in Council which denounced trade with Communists on the ground that they were wicked people. But Russia, being desperately short of cattle, is willing to offer about double the current rates, so that Canadian farmers, who are equally desperately short of markets, at last see a hope of salvation if only Mr. Bennett will allow them to do a deal with Anti-Christ. After all, he swallowed his scruples not long ago on behalf of the Aluminium Corporation of Canada. As a hard-headed man of business, with the political support of the whole cattle industry to consider, we may surely rely on him to do so again. At the same time, our own Government might take a hint and hurry up with the Anglo-Russian trade agreement, which is said to be held up by pressure exerted by Mr. Bennett on behalf of the Canadian timber exporters. We need not leave all the business sense to Mr. Bennett and keep all the sentiment to ourselves.

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Jugoslavia has been unpleasantly in the public eye of late. She has had one of her periodical squabbles with Italy (squabbles in which France is not always a completely disinterested party), and another with Bulgaria, over certain frontier incidents. As a result of this the Belgrade Government has taken the drastic—as it seems to us, unnecessarily drastic—step of closing the Macedonian frontier. Unfortunately the Belgrade Government is an offence to a great number of its own citizens as well as to neighbouring States. The dictatorship, with its centralising, Pan-Serbist policy, is detested alike by the Croats and Slovenes and by the Macedonians, over whom it tyrannises. And its methods of espionage and police terrorism were exposed in a remarkable statement in the London press last week. The signatories of this statement included Lord Cushendun, Lord Noel-Buxton, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher and Professor Gilbert Murray, who have all recently been in Jugoslavia, and who insist on the danger of the present situation. They urge what we were urging in these columns ten years ago and more, that there will be no peace in Jugoslavia without a federal system guaranteeing provincial Home Rule to the peoples incorporated in the Triune Kingdom. They even go so far as to suggest that Great Britain, France, Czechoslovakia and Rumania, should press this on King Alexander. We wish they would, though we doubt whether they would find that polite but determined despot very amenable.

* * *

The fate of the Dutch-Belgian Customs Treaty is hanging in the balance. This treaty, when it was first published a few months ago, was widely acclaimed as the first real victory for freer trade in a world of economic nationalism run mad. It guaranteed not only that Belgium, Luxemburg and Holland would in no case increase the duties on one another's goods, but also that they would steadily reduce them year by year until the three territories became virtually a single economic area for purposes of commerce. It was left open to any other country in the world to enter the proposed Customs Union on the same terms. So far, so good. But objections soon began to appear; and the leading objector is Great Britain. The proposed mutual reduction of duties on one another's goods by the three countries concerned cuts across the "most favoured nation clause," Great Britain's traditional method of securing commercial concessions. So, of course, does any project for a Customs Union over any area narrower than the world. In fact, insistence on "M.F.N." treatment is calculated to wreck all negotiations for mutual tariff reductions, though Great Britain insists on freedom to make such mutual arrangements with other Empire countries. This attitude clearly cannot be sustained. The M.F.N. clause, in its present form, will have to go if any progress is to be made towards an agreed lowering of tariffs. British opinion for the most part recognises this, but the Government is apparently disposed to hold up the Dutch-Belgian project in the hope of getting some sort of *quid pro quo*. The Dutch are unwilling to ratify at present if Great Britain objects, since they fear retaliation. So the one really favourable project for the restoration of commercial liberty is being opposed, and may be wrecked unless we waive our objections.

* * *

The local education authorities are now completing their schemes under Circular 1421, and it becomes possible to estimate the effect of at least one of the Government's economy proposals. The first fact that emerges is that there will be wide differences of administrative practice. "Equality of opportunity" will be as remote geographically as socially. Not only do the suggested means scales vary in range in different areas, but they are based on differing principles—in some areas on family income, in others on parental income; in some on gross income, in others on income less rent and rates. Secondly, it is clear that the Board, which under Lord Irwin's control is permitting the widest imaginable "discretion" in interpreting its circular, is not going to get the saving it hoped. Few authorities intend raising fees to the limits suggested, and the majority concur in regarding the proposed limit of exemption for fees—between £3 and £4 weekly—as too low to be practicable. The usual figure seems to be around £5. Barnsley has fixed £7. Maintenance allowances for poorer children differ widely. It is noteworthy that in many areas—Sheffield, Barnsley, Newcastle-on-Tyne, for example—the force of educational opinion (voiced often by the co-opted members) has insisted on an upward revision of the scales originally proposed by the local administration. Thirdly, a number of authorities have taken Lord Irwin's word that the regulations did not mean what they said in prescribing 50 per cent. as the maximum for "special places." Manchester has logically turned its 100 per cent. scholarship places into 100 per cent. special places and is keeping a "nominal fee" of six guineas instead of the nine guineas laid down in the circular; Burnley courageously proposes to replace 50 per cent. scholarship places by 100 per cent. special places, and so—though on a harsher means scale—does Newcastle. Some harm will be done by Circular 1421, since some authorities had prepared their schemes before Lord Irwin's generous interpretation of it was known, but the moral of the story is that a mean and foolish economy can be defeated by an intelligent opposition from local authorities.

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A few years ago a Royal Commission recommended drastic reforms in the National Health Insurance scheme, including the extension of medical treatment to the dependent children of contributors. That report has, of course, lain snug in its pigeon-hole. But the National Government has carried reforms devised by itself. These have the practical object of saving the taxpayers' pockets and not the sentimental one of improving children's health, and they come into force on January 1st. Insured married women will have their sickness benefit rate reduced from 12s. to 10s., and disablement benefit (which follows after twenty-six weeks of sickness benefit) from 7s. 6d. to 5s.; the unmarried woman's will be cut slightly less—to 6s. Besides these economies, there will be another at the expense of the unemployed of both sexes. Unemployed persons are at present excused health insurance contributions; in future they will be credited with only one contribution for every two weeks of unemployment. Next summer, therefore, we may expect to see a large number of people with arrears shown against them, and faced with the alternative of paying off those arrears or losing the right to benefits in the ensuing period. Perhaps they will console themselves with the thought of the positive blessings conferred on them by the National Government—the Ottawa Agreements, for example, which are doing so much to brighten the lives of the poor.

* * *

The latest proposals for the initiation of an experiment in the hydrogenation of coal, at a cost to the country of approximately £7,000,000, prove at least that the zeal of Conservatives for economy admits of exceptions. The argument appears to be that an experiment on this scale must be undertaken because it is impossible to tell whether it might succeed on a commercial scale from any test less ambitious. That even its supporters are not too optimistic may be gauged from the frequency with which they urge the security of national supplies of oil as a reason for making the experiment. Surely, however, we shall at least have some public examination of the merits of other methods before engaging on a new one, the experimental results of which have so far been discouraging. There are various low temperature carbonisation processes which produce some motor spirit, and we have heard nothing of proposals for public support of the gas industry, the only one which has successfully produced motor spirit from coal cheaply, in developing this sideline on a larger scale. In connection with low temperature carbonisation Mr. Ormsby-Gore achieved a real triumph of circumlocution lately in the House. Certain Government departments have undertaken to burn "Metro-Coalite," a domestic fuel by-product of the process. Asked whether any departments in the Palace of Westminster had declined to use it, Mr. Ormsby-Gore replied: "I believe that in certain fireplaces in the House of Lords there is no wish to use this fuel," thus tactfully avoiding the question whether the objection sprang from the staff or the members of that House.

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Mr. David Garnett has been appointed Literary Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION as from the New Year. We are glad to be able to say that Mr. R. Ellis Roberts will continue as a regular contributor to the paper.

OUR TYPOGRAPHICAL CHANGES

BOTH *The New Statesman* and *The Nation*, before their amalgamation in February, 1931, were printed on what are called "flat bed" machines, a type of machine used largely for book printing. The production rate of such machines is about one thousand copies per hour, and the two papers, at the time of their amalgamation, were approaching the size of circulation which necessitates printing on a rotary machine, a type of machine used for newspapers and the more popular periodicals.

The amalgamation of *The New Statesman* and *The Nation* made rotary printing at once necessary for this journal, since it was impracticable to spend twenty or more hours upon the printing of each issue.

But rotary printing has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. Even with the best equipment in the country it is impossible to get quite such good printing from a rotary as from a flat-bed machine. The much faster running of the rotary machine largely accounts for this; but the difference between the two methods can be almost entirely, if not entirely, overcome by a choice of types more suited to rotary printing.

Beginning with next week's issue (January 7th), THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will use types which should provide a much more even "impression," as well as being more legible and less tiring to the eye than the types now in use, particularly the smaller sizes. Minor changes will also be made—stronger headings, side-headings to the Notes, etc., but no alteration will be made in the front page heading.

It will be interesting and helpful to us to have the views of readers when they have seen the changes in operation for a week or two.

In announcing these alterations we should like to acknowledge the co-operation of Mr. Oliver Simon, our printers The Cornwall Press, and the Monotype Corporation.

POVERTY AND CHARITY

EVERY Christmas the *Times* gives us a survey of the hoary evil which used to be called the Poor Law and has now been refurbished under the name of Public Assistance. The story of 1932, which appeared last week, makes gloomy reading. The present total of the "legal poor," or paupers, is about 1,283,000, of whom 193,000 are in institutions, and 1,090,000 on out-relief. These figures show a substantial rise over those at the end of 1931, when the grand total stood at 1,100,000 and the number on out-relief at 904,000. The spread of the destitution is, of course, uneven; it is naturally worst in the big industrial centres, Hull, Sunderland, Sheffield, Liverpool and Manchester, Bristol and Glasgow. Vagrancy touched a record figure during the year; it was 15,795 on March 25 last, and though this fell later, it stood at close on 15,000 at the end of November.

These statistics will surprise no one. They are the inevitable result of the universal depression, aggravated in certain areas, as the *Times*' article points out, by special causes—"the cessation of unemployment benefit under decisions of the Courts of Referees, disqualification under the Anomalies Regulations, and the tendency of employers (now noticeable in agricultural districts) to dismiss workmen in a slack season and to dispense with casual winter employment." But they make a damning commentary on the reform of the Poor Law which was carried in 1929. The Local Government Act of that year abolished at long last the Boards of Guardians and transferred their functions to the County and County Borough Councils. It allowed, though it did not command, the "break-up of the Poor Law," which had been recommended by the Royal Commission in 1909 and agitated for ever since. And so far as institutional relief is concerned, it has effected some salutary changes. But its fundamental vice was that it still left the care of the able-bodied destitute in the hands of the local authorities. The great majority of the million and more on out-relief are unemployed men and their dependants who ought never to have been "public assistance cases." The public assistance committees, as has been demonstrated over and over again, are not the proper bodies to deal with the unemployed. But the last Conservative Government chose this way of spoiling a great reform, and the National Government added another mischief by saddling the local authorities with the administration of the means test, and thus still further confounding confusion. And so it is that, in this department at least, new presbyter is old priest writ large. For all the change of names and machinery, the Poor Law spirit persists in the public assistance committees, and the hatred of it and the shame of it still persist among the working class.

But the million and a quarter of the "legal poor" represent, as everyone knows, no more than a fraction of the lump of poverty and misery that confronts us. There are nearly three million registered unemployed, and not even the statesmen who compose our National Government think that they can pass the whole of this monstrous problem over to the local authorities and the ratepayers. They will not abolish the unemployment insurance system, though they may tighten it up and cut a little more off benefits. But insurance is not enough. Public opinion, and not merely Labour opinion, demands some more positive action to mitigate the distress and to prevent the demoralisation caused by the enforced and long-continued idleness of masses of wage-earners. The Government are justified in protesting that they cannot cure unemployment, if by that is meant putting everyone into a job. But the protest is hardly needed. No sane person expects them to do anything of the sort, or even to try, seeing that they are a capitalist and not a Socialist Government. What they have been urged to do is to initiate schemes of public work—some of which urgently wants doing, all of which will be of high economic and social value. To that their reply is that they have already done and are doing a great deal, and that we must beware of wild-cat schemes and extravagant relief-works. How much the great deal amounts to was shown by an answer of the Minister of Labour to a question in the House last week. Something under six hundred schemes have been carried out with State assistance since September, 1931. They include road, sewerage, gas, water and electricity supply schemes, dock and harbour improvements, land drainage, park and recreation ground construction. They were employing directly at the end of October six thousand five hundred men. Six thousand five hundred! Why not sixty thousand or six hundred thousand? Why is a big attack on the slums, why are big land schemes, to be called fantastic? Do they sound too socialistic, or is it merely that they involve more public expenditure?

The answer is pretty plain. But, since the volume of unemployment does not diminish, and since a considerable number of the Government's supporters have uneasy consciences about it, something must be done. And so private charity has been rediscovered. There have been going on for some time isolated enterprises by members of the Society of Friends and other philanthropic bodies or individuals which have given work and encouragement to unemployed men and women, and for which in general we have nothing but praise. But these have been only a drop in the ocean, and the plan now is to multiply them under the stimulus of the National Council of Social Service, which is to be assisted for that purpose by a Government grant of £10,000. We have nothing to say against the N.C.S.S. or against private citizens contributing personal service or money for the alleviation of unemployment, though we doubt whether the multiplication of the drops will amount to more than a bucketful in the ocean. But what we are exercised about is the recrudescence of charity as a national policy for dealing with poverty. The Government spokesmen deny that it is their policy. But it appears to be someone's policy—many people's policy; for it is being assiduously boosted in the Conservative press, it is being pushed eagerly by the old school of professional philanthropists, and it fits in with the efforts of many Conservative public assistance committees to unload their cases on to private voluntary agencies.

Is it necessary to remind our ruling classes, as Mr. Jack Jones reminded them in the House of Commons last week, that the attitude of the working classes on this matter is still "curse your charity!"—that indeed, with the advance of Socialism and the growing resentment of social inequalities, the feeling is stronger to-day that it ever was? The charity that means disinterested personal service may be acceptable and may achieve something. But a system of organised patronage, which accentuates class divisions and keeps alive the class spirit, will only bring grist to the mill of the revolutionists who want to sharpen the conflict. Which way are we heading? And what policy of their own, beyond that £10,000 grant and the Prime Minister's homilies, have the Government to offer?

INDIA AND THE CONFERENCE

THE departure of the delegates marks the end of a period lasting over two years, during which constitution-making has been conducted by negotiation, the conference method initiated by Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Lord Irwin. It is true that since the formation of the National Government there has been a marked change of tone, and the theoretical equality of status at the Round Table has worn very thin. At times the Indian delegates must have felt like the old professional who had spent the afternoon bowling at Dr. Grace—"I puts 'em where I likes, and he puts 'em where he likes." Possibly they take the sudden change of front more philosophically than might be expected. The East has long appreciated the theory put forward by Abdur Rahman, the Afghanistan Amir, that the real beauty of the British constitution is the ease with which a change of Government enables England to avoid her obligations.

Although no one with any first-hand knowledge of India is likely to share Sir Samuel Hoare's superficial optimism, it would be a mistake to assume that the conference method has proved a complete failure. On the asset side may be placed the general acceptance of immediate federation. The agreement of the Princes to this course, though subsequently modified for bargaining purposes, means that a responsible Government must be set up in Delhi within a year or two. No safeguards, effective or ineffective, can really alter this basic fact. Without such an agreement to federate, the Simon Commission's proposals—provincial autonomy with a vague promise of a future federation—must have held the field, whatever party was in power. On this point it is not necessary to take too seriously the objections to federation raised by the more vocal part of the Congress Party. The Congress attitude is based on years of hopeless opposition, and few of their leaders have considered the implications of a unitary Government for India. They have preferred to envisage a long struggle for the control of the Government of India in its present form and with its present dual authority, a struggle which, if successful, could have ended only in chaos. For this reason a Federal Government may receive unexpected support from men who have backed the purely destructive policy of the Congress because they did not believe there would be any real transfer of authority.

There are other achievements of the last two years which can be ascribed to the Conference. There has been a great simplification of the relations between the Indian States and the Government. During the seventy years which followed Lord Canning's issue of the Sannads, practically nothing had been done to clear up the muddle of treaty rights, financial and military obligations, and "political law" which related to Indian India. These have now been reduced to some sort of order, and though a few points will remain in dispute until the last moment, there are no insoluble questions left open. Even more important are two subjects about which complete agreement could never be obtained, and on which it was essential that some definite and authoritative pronouncement should be made. These referred only to British India, namely, the franchise and the apportionment of seats in the legislatures between the communities. The findings of the Lothian Committee and the communal award, however open to criticism they may be, have undoubtedly cut short a vast amount of rather futile controversy, futile because for many years it will be entirely impossible to know how much real support each protagonist may have. If either can be improved by general agreement, so much the better; but it is significant that the only group which threatens not to co-operate on account of their dislike of the award is the Sikh community, and from any democratic standpoint theirs is a very weak case.

On the debit side there is a marked deterioration in the Indian situation since 1930. For two years the administration has been active in little except the suppression of political offences, and has been unable to check a progressive increase in ordinary crime and a steady worsening of the economic position. The bureaucratic machine which will be taken over by the new Federal Government will be a poorer asset than it would have been ten years ago. It remains as isolated as ever, and even if in certain areas there is also a reaction against the Congress, this is not really a source of strength to the Government, for it may merely show a general disillusionment which is spreading to the villages. While it is impossible to acquit the Congress Party of weak and inconsistent leadership since the Karachi meeting, much of the troubles of the last year are due to the universal feeling that nothing could be expected from a Conservative Government, and the events which led to the wholesale imprisonment of nationalist leaders are a miserable prelude to the inauguration of a new Government. The position is the more dangerous because the new Government of India Bill is sure to contain a number of provisions which will tempt these leaders when released to concentrate upon constitutional issues.

The three points upon which nationalist feeling will run strongest, and which it will be most difficult for Indian Liberals to defend, are the emergency powers of the Governors and the Viceroy, the control of army policy, and the financial safeguards. Of these the second is possibly the most important, for the Government statement provides no guarantee that serious efforts will be made to build up a national army. Official opinion still inclines to the view that the future army must be drawn entirely from the so-called martial races, and it would seem that for many years India is to be dependent upon British troops, upon trans-frontier regiments like the Gurkhas, who can never be brought into a purely Indian force, and upon soldiers recruited from a small part of Northern India. Unfortunately, Indian nationalists have paid too much attention to the question of replacing British officers in the Indian army by Indians, and are only slowly realising that a Sikh regiment does not become less of a Sikh regiment because a dozen British officers are replaced by officers drawn from other parts of India. The whole question of reorganising the army is still left in the hands of a British Commander-in-Chief, who will normally take the soldier's view that his sole duty is to provide the most efficient fighting force at the price. The Viceroy is likely to be the whipping-boy in a long series of disputes, which will not be prevented by the vague arrangements for consultation between the Responsible and the Reserved sides of the Executive.

The Government seems to have maintained the same attitude towards financial safeguards as last year. This is unfortunate, for they will be a fruitful source of trouble in the future, and certain changes which have occurred during the last twelve months have removed their main justification. The "rupee ratio" controversy, which aroused so much Indian feeling, is no longer acute, owing to the rupee being linked with sterling. Since England went off the gold standard there is no likelihood that an Indian legislature will tamper with the present exchange, but some time in the next decade the accusation will again be made that India's monetary policy is being controlled in England's interest, and the Viceroy will again have to act as a buffer, this time between the legislature and Whitehall. His position will be even weaker than in a controversy over army affairs, for the Commander-in-Chief will have his staff, but the Viceroy will have no administrative cadre through which he can carry on in the case of a deadlock. Most of the Indian delegates and the majority of the "co-operators" in India belong to the property-owning classes, but they will have to defend these provisions, made supposedly in the interests of the investors, before an Indian public nearly all of whom are very poor. In view of the American Debt dispute it is almost certain that Indians will put forward some demand for revision of their liabilities, and the party which has to defend British financial control will be in a hopeless position.

There are many other questions which are not dealt with in Sir Samuel Hoare's final speech, and on which no decision appears to have been reached. A most important point is the Federation's power to alter its own constitution, which, incidentally, was stressed in the Simon Report. There is a fatal lack of finality about these proceedings, and this places in a difficult position those Englishmen who have been working during the last ten years to persuade their countrymen to make a real transfer of responsible Government. They see the last stages of this transfer being botched by men who five years ago would have derided the idea of creating a Federal Government for India. In a more settled world it would be easier to condemn outright a constitution containing so many defects, but in practice there is little likelihood of any revision from the British side for many years, and it would probably be best for Indians to work the new constitution for all it was worth, knowing that actually most of the "safeguards" are not likely to be effective, and that many of the present obstacles will disappear automatically. The British official element is rapidly decreasing, and in a few years' time the pressure to reduce the British Army in India will probably come from England. There are real dangers and difficulties in maintaining an Indian Federation, and these will be greatly increased by every year's delay. It is for this reason that the Irish parallel is dangerous, for Southern Ireland is a small homogeneous country, about the size of Gwalior or Baroda, while the Indian Federation will have to overcome the risks of inter-provincial disputes, possibly on a communal basis, and of troubles with the Princes. The economic position is appalling, with a steadily increasing population pressing heavily on the land, an urban slum population growing up in the industrial centres, and a mass of middle-class unemployment. Indians will probably be wise to work the new constitution, trusting to practical experience and the building up of precedents to remove any anomalies. The original Canadian constitution contained many safeguards. The Government was not even allowed to dispose of public land without reference to London. Such unworkable safeguards become a dead-letter and then disappear.

G. T. GARRATT.

A LONDON DIARY

IN his reply to Mr. Lloyd George's attack on the Prime Minister for broadcasting at Lossiemouth instead of defending himself in the House of Commons, Major Elliot made the very outspoken comment that everyone who heard the Prime Minister's speech on unemployment "would certainly agree that the Prime Minister when he went home for reasons of health was going home for reasons that were manifest to anyone who heard that speech." The fact is that in modern conditions the job of being Prime Minister puts a great strain on the physique, and in a parliamentary system no one stands much chance of reaching the top until his youthful energy has left him. Aided by the war Mr. Lloyd George himself became Prime Minister when he was a mere chicken of fifty-three. And then Mr. Lloyd George was an unusually young fifty-three; he has a terrific physique and measures goodness knows what round the chest. Wherever Parliamentary Government has broken down this question of the age of democratic ministers and the youth of their assailants has played an important part. Some of Mr. Lloyd George's remarks were distinctly unfair and he might have won more sympathy if he had confined himself to suggesting a retiring age for Prime Ministers.

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Mr. Justice McCardie is responsible for more irrelevant and contentious *obiter dicta* than any other High Court judge of his time, but I am glad to see him throwing out some observations about the continued importance of the art of public speaking. It was like Mr. Justice McCardie to damage the sensible part of his own speech by adding an obviously untenable remark that the silent man has "never gained a position in any English Cabinet." One could quote numbers of strong (or not so strong) silent men in English Cabinets. Broadcasting is giving the spoken word an immense new power, and it is compelling persons who want public influence to perfect a new technique of speaking. Meanwhile public men fail nowadays to realise the importance of working at the art of speaking. Joseph Chamberlain, whose direct and cold indictments have often been quoted as the end of the oratorical tradition from Burke and Fox to Gladstone, spent hours and days in preparing and, at first, in learning his speeches by heart. To-day there are very few men who seem to take the pains to acquire a first-class platform technique. Mr. Churchill has always realised its value, Mr. MacDonald has exploited his fine voice to the point of exhaustion, and Mr. Maxton is a born rhetorician who adds a delicious sense of humour to the usual make-up of the Labour orator. The only junior politician to-day who seems really to have worked at public speaking is Sir Oswald Mosley. What a difference it might have meant to English politics to-day if the Labour movement had a speaker of the quality of Jaurès or Trotsky!

* * *

Surveying the B.B.C. Talks that have been given in 1932, and the projected programme for next year, I am, on the whole, impressed with the imagination and intelligence shown by Sir John Reith and his staff. There have been a few absurd cases of timidity in face of official pressure, but the general thesis that the way to deal with controversial subjects is to refuse the dull and the safe and to let keen exponents of different points of view argue freely seems to have won general acceptance. That is the only interesting and educational method. The anonymous Talks on psycho-analysis were admirable, and the public will presumably learn who the broadcaster was when they are published in book form. It is a real step forward that a subject which used to be thought too "difficult" for the wireless can now pass without any rumpus if treated sensibly and with urbanity. Every now and again the B.B.C. hits on a born broadcaster. I have just read Commander King-Hall's *Talks to Children* (published by Sidgwick and Jackson at 2s. 6d.). Here is information, good sense, good humour, humour and a live point of view expressed without dogmatism. Among the new Talks coming along I see that there is to be a series on Housing, which will include not only reports by Mr. Howard Marshall on housing conditions in various parts of the country, but also Talks by practical experts who should be able to explain why, in building a couple of million houses since the war, we have so completely failed to clear the slums. The Minister of Health, who claims that his new Bill will make a start on slum clearance, should be particularly grateful for talks by experienced people who can help the public to judge of its merits. I wonder, by the way, whether Sir Austen Chamberlain, who has not hitherto been known as a great social reformer, was inspired to make his really splendid outburst in the House of Commons the other night by Mr. Garvin's record of his father's zeal for slum clearance? I can imagine Sir Austen saying to himself, "well, we've got tariffs—here is another matter father was really keen about and which we've neglected since his time. I'll show them that Joseph Chamberlain did not use up all the reforming energy in the family!"

* * *

Suitably posted in a gentlemen's lavatory in the City I saw the other day an invitation to "Smart, keen men" to join a certain well-known regiment. Amongst the inducements offered are: "a complete uniform and equipment free . . . football, cricket, boxing, bayonet fighting, many social events." One wonders, as they used to wonder during the war, why nothing is said about a free burial.

* * *

A lobby correspondent in the House of Commons defined his job the other day as "an effort to keep *au courant* with *faits accomplis*."

* * *

The rate of exchange is that which varies to the advantage or disadvantage of a country.—A recent definition by a student of London University.

* * *

If General von Schleicher finally assumes the Chancellorship in Germany it will mean that at last the real key to the crisis is at the helm of affairs.—*Provincial Paper.*

CRITIC.

OLD MOORE'S LEAGUE ALMANACK FOR 1933

May 1. Night attack on Stockholm by 500 large Eskimo bombers. Stockholm destroyed. M. Avenol summons Council of League.

May 3. Meeting of Council. M. Benes proposes vote of a million gold francs for relief of Stockholm Refugees. (Markets shaken.) British Delegation approves in principle, but insists on reduction of sum to £5. Eskimo Delegation, on point of order, claims that Swedes have no right to attend the Council since Sweden, having no capital, is no longer a nation. On motion of Sir J. Simon the point referred to Committee of Jurists, and Council adjourned.

May 6. Paris press urges necessity of clear thinking. Since Sweden is no longer a nation there is no question before the League. Will not the League's precipitate generosity perhaps galvanise into life an embarrassing corpse?

May 8. The *Times* in a reassuring leader explains that, owing to difficulties of transfer, the whole £5 is to lie in the vaults of the Bank of England earmarked for use of Stockholm refugees. It is hoped by operation of Aliens Act none of them will be able to get at it. Relief in Paris and London.

May 9. Mass demonstration in Hyde Park against extravagance of League.

May 14. Jurists recommend that Swedish Delegates, if still alive, should sit provisionally, while question referred to International Court. The rest of Sweden, factories, towns, etc., destroyed.

May 15. At the Council the Grand Eskimo makes formal complaint against Sweden. Impossible for Eskimos to live at peace with a neighbouring country in which disorder reigns, the towns are in ruins, the sanitation shocking, the so-called inhabitants mostly dead, and the newspapers full of anti-Eskimo feeling. Eskimo intervention an absolute necessity. Sir J. Simon deprecates precipitate action; Commission appointed to inquire into facts. Council adjourned.

May 16—June 1. Renewed demonstrations in Hyde Park. Grand banquet of 1,000 persons in Albert Hall to protest against extravagance of League. Lord Cecil burnt in effigy.

June 7. The *Observer* denounces the "disastrous precipitancy" of the Council. *Times* defends the League and observes that, after all, the Commission of Inquiry may never report, so that no harm will have been done.

June 8. Deputation of all religions to Prime Minister, who replies: "Ah, my friends! If only I and my old friend the Grand Eskimo could smoke a quiet pipe together in the chimney corner!" (Markets recover.)

June 9. Commission reports: Eskimos have "resorted to war" in breach of Covenant; have "used force for the settlement of a dispute" contrary to Kellogg Pact; used poison gas contrary to Gas Convention.

June 10. Disappointment and indignation in Paris and London. *Observer* considers Commission's Report "maniacal." *Times* proposes that Report, while treated with all respect, should be taken as read and not discussed further.

June 11. Meeting of Council. M. Madariaga proposes Eskimos be expelled from League and subjected to economic blockade under Art. XVI. Sir J. Simon urges circumspection. The Eskimo air-force is extremely powerful. It cannot strictly be said that Eskimos have "resorted to war" in breach of Covenant, since they have scrupulously refrained from declaring war. Neither have they "used force for the settlement of a dispute" for it seems clear that there was no dispute at all between them and Sweden. It seems also inaccurate to say that they used "poison gas," since the gas they used was an ordinary industrial product, perfectly harmless to those who were provided with the proper masks. It was also most difficult to obtain first-hand information, since those Swedes who were present during the alleged bombardment are all dead. He proposed a Resolution:

> The Council expresses sympathy with the relatives of the deceased and regrets that the improvidence of the Swedish Government in not supplying their subjects with gas masks has led to such unfortunate results.

The Grand Eskimo said he was most anxious for conciliation, but if any such one-sided resolution were passed the Eskimos would have to leave the League. The words "sympathy," "regret" and "unfortunate" were particularly painful to Eskimo feelings. He proposed:

> The Council censures the improvidence of the Swedish Government.

but could make no further concession.

In a conciliatory speech M. Paul-Boncour observed that France was the soldier of humanity and marched, head erect, towards the ideal. (Applause.)

Danish delegate referred to Order circulated through the Eskimo army: "Copenhagen next," and asked what exactly was meant.

Sir J. Simon said the phrase was evidently used in a purely geographical sense. An expert Committee of geographers appointed to study and report.

The Grand Eskimo said he expected his resolution to be accepted unanimously. Unanimity at last attained by omitting from the resolution all words except "The Council censures improvidence."

June 12. Copenhagen destroyed by Eskimo bombers. Danes demand League intervention.

June 13. Sir J. Simon says events have shown the wisdom of a patient and conciliatory attitude. He points out that the Stockholm Commission has not yet sent in its final report; it would be obviously improper to form conclusions about the second incident until the first was settled.

German delegate says Germany has always been a good friend to the Eskimos and expects support from them now. M. Paul-Boncour confines himself to the statement that France walks, head erect, towards the dawn. (Applause.) Council adjourns.

President Hoover telegraphs that Justice must be done. (Sensation.) President Roosevelt telegraphs that no action must be taken. (Alarm.)

June 14. *Daily Express* states that the poison gas used by the Eskimos is gravely suspected not to be of British make. (Excitement. Markets upset.)

June 15. H.M.G. addresses inquiry to Eskimo Government. Anti-Eskimo riots in London and Liverpool. Two South Americans and a valuable gorilla killed by mistake.

June 16. United States Senate, after bitter debate, decide unanimously (1) that action shall be taken and (2) that Justice shall not be done. The two Presidents explain that this is what they really meant.

Eskimo answer: The gas in question was supplied by the Europe-America Benevolent and Patriotic Steel Corporation, of which a well-known Englishman, Sir Bahnhofer Alonzo Djamsky is President. Feeling somewhat quieted. Apologies sent to S. America and the Zoo.

June 17. Mr. MacDonald and Grand Eskimo smoke a quiet pipe in the chimney corner. Markets recover. Grand Eskimo made Knight of the Garter.

June 18. Eskimos destroy Belfast. Bonfires throughout Southern Ireland.

June 19. Sir J. Simon says no time is to be lost. As soon as ever the Stockholm Commission has sent in its final report, an event which may be almost certainly anticipated in the not remote future, a strong committee of inquiry should be instantly appointed. In the meantime he deprecates the attribution of blame to either side. Discussion of M. Madariaga's resolution continued. Grand Eskimo explains again that he has carefully avoided resort to war, and has never sought the solution of any dispute. He cannot understand why his nation is made the object of odious accusations. Sir J. Simon warmly welcomes this proof of the Eskimos' loyalty to the Covenant. M. Paul-Boncour affirms that France is the standard-bearer of Liberty and marches, head erect, towards some destination which was not clearly heard owing to the applause.

June 20–24. Disquieting rumours. Markets jumpy.

June 25. World protest of Europe-America Benevolent and Patriotic Steel Corporation against inequitable and oppressive action of Eskimos in making war with nothing but gas. The Corporation had gone to great trouble and expense to get these wars started, and had laid up armaments of all kinds in masses sufficient to supply all probable belligerents for several years. This dishonourable and inconsiderate use of the cheapest and quickest weapon threatened the Corporation with ruin. The Corporation, however, knew how to defend itself, as the Eskimos would discover. Iceland declares its complete independence from Denmark.

June 26. Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the Grand Eskimo.

June 27. Chancellor of Exchequer, speaking with emotion, said England had always a tie of sympathy with the Eskimos. He fully realised that the action they had taken was a necessity for national security, since it was extremely dangerous to have so many large bombs about, undischarged. But when it came to waging war—for war he must call it—without using the main products of our most patriotic manufacturers, he must warn the Grand Eskimo that there are limits! How could England live if her manufacturers had no market? As well have Free Trade at once!

Eskimos destroy Dublin. Bonfires throughout Ulster.

June 30. Sir J. Simon says that a policy of patience has produced excellent results so far, but there is such a thing as equity. He is much moved by the Chancellor's remarks. M. Paul-Boncour said (amid applause) that, on the point of law, he would only point out that France was the fatherland of the spirit, and took some action (not clearly audible) towards the morning star.

July 1. Secret meeting of Lord Craigavon and Mr. De Valera. Treaty concluded for joint action against Eskimos.

July 5. Mr. Garvin, in a balanced article, says the Grand Eskimo has rendered service to civilisation, especially in saving the Council of the League from its demoniac enthusiasts.

July 6. Sir Alonzo Djamsky, with large escort of merchant ships, arrives in Iceland. Wild enthusiasm.

Mr. MacDonald says: "Ah, my friends." Markets rally.

July 9. Iceland declares war on Eskimos. Markets convulsed.

July 10. Emergency Council of League unanimously calls on Iceland to retire within her frontiers and pay war indemnity. Meantime sanctions of Article XVI. to be applied in full rigour. Sir J. Simon says that in times like these the Covenant must be upheld at all costs. Iceland is a small nation and must not defy the League. M. Paul-Boncour in a scene of tumultuous enthusiasm was understood to express the same views as last time.

July 10–17. Icelandic Force with 8,000 aeroplanes and all superfluous stores of the Europe-America BPSC routs the Eskimos, destroys their air-fleet, confiscates their walruses, captures the Grand Eskimo and annexes the North Pole.

Nobel Peace Prize taken away from Grand Eskimo and awarded to Djamsky.

July 18. Council of League. Sir J. Simon says he had always insisted that a patient and conciliatory policy would have the best result, and events have proved him right. Sanctions of Article XVI. withdrawn; Iceland made permanent member of Council. M. Paul-Boncour, concurring, explained that throughout this unspeakable tempest, as always throughout her history, France had . . . but the rest of his words were lost in the applause.

July 19. The rest of the year. Dispute between Northern Ireland and Irish Free State. International Court is asked to interpret the Treaty drawn up between Mr. De Valera and Lord Craigavon, particularly the phrases "the true religion" (which in the Treaty is made compulsory over all Ireland) and "a proper and sensible relation to Great Britain" (which both parties have agreed to accept).

July 20. Sir Alonzo Djamsky and the Prime Minister smoke a quiet pipe in the chimney corner. Mr. MacDonald says: "Ah, my friends!" Markets recover.

HAS MRS. BEETON FAILED?

It was with some astonishment that most of us learned during the week that never till the present year did the National Portrait Gallery possess a portrait of Mrs. Beeton. Mrs. Beeton, it will be generally agreed, is the most famous English authoress who ever lived. Her name is a household word in thousands of homes in which Jane Austen is as little known as Sappho. Other popular authoresses, such as Miss Braddon and Miss Marie Corelli, appear and disappear; but Mrs. Beeton has achieved the deathlessness of a classic as well as the circulation of a best-seller. Even those who have never read a line of her great work know her name as they know the name of Helen of Troy. Born in 1836, she has already become a legendary figure, and in a polytheistic age she would undoubtedly have been given a place in the Pantheon as the goddess of cookery.

Her position is, I imagine, unique in the history of cookery and its literature. I know of no female cook in the Greek or Roman world who was given a pedestal like hers. Man throughout most of the ages of civilisation has looked on gastronomy as his own preserve, and the names of the ancients whose greatness consisted in their knowledge of food were, so far as I can discover, all names of men. Even authorities on the subject to-day, such as Mr. Earle Welby, are clearly convinced that in cookery at least there can be no equality between the sexes. There are men who are readier to admit the fitness of a woman to be a Prime Minister than her fitness to be a cook. They hold that no woman in the secrecy of her heart cares much about food, and that, since the rule for cooks is much the same as the rule for poets, "Look in thy heart and cook," it is useless to expect the perfect dishes from a creature so cold and—indifferent. They point out that no female cook has ever proved her passion for the art in a manner comparable with that of the French chef, Vatel, who committed suicide because the fish was late.

To such disparagers of feminine genius the fame of Mrs. Beeton must be a bitter pill to swallow. For this modest lady, without aiming at it, has won a reputation that has put that of Brillat-Savarin himself in the shade. Brillat-Savarin's fame, it is true, is world-wide, as Mrs. Beeton's is not, but it is world-wide only in the sense in which the fame of Kant or of Hegel is world-wide. This means that there are a few learned people in every civilised country who know of him, but that nowhere is he known to the multitude. He is for the highbrows of the table, the secret society of those who like recondite flavours and who can dispute for an hour over the comparative merits of expressionism and impressionism in the making of sauces. He himself protested that the best dishes are often the simplest, but none the less he failed to catch the ear of the simple. Those who lunch on sausages and mashed, or on two fried and a back, know him not. Mrs. Beeton, however, is famous wherever poor men meet for a midday meal of roast beef and two veg., and is the patron saint of cookery even among those whose favourite dish is rabbit. Some years ago at the Savoy Hotel I attended a lunch in honour of Brillat-Savarin, and ate some of his favourite dishes, to the accompaniment of wines that might have been discovered in a dream. I hope that, when the centenary of Mrs. Beeton's birth comes round three years hence, the organisers of the Brillat-Savarin lunch will organise as noble a banquet in honour of this great Lady of the Oven.

Mrs. Beeton, we are told, began her single masterpiece at the age of 23, finished it in four years, and died when she was 29. How serious was the purpose with which she says, and with what conscientious assiduity she fulfilled it, may be gathered from the preface, in which she wrote: "I must frankly own that, if I had known beforehand the labour which this book has entailed, I should never have been courageous enough to commence it. What moved me, in the first instance, to attempt a work like this was the discomfort and suffering which I had seen brought about by household mismanagement. I have always thought that there is no more fruitful source of family discontent than badly cooked dinners and untidy ways." One catches at once the note of high seriousness that made the Victorians what they were. There is none of the amoral nonsense of modern times which offers us delicious banquets with an air of saying "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die." There is no taint of the Epicurean gourmet in Mrs. Beeton's phrasing. Her purpose is not, like Mr. Ambrose Heath's, to lure us into a Paradise of dishes, but to allay "discomfort and suffering" and to make an end of "family discontent." If she believed in the principle, "Feed the brute," she did so, not in order to tempt the brute to greater greed, but in order to convert him into something better than a brute. Without the help of any of Pavlov's experiments, she realised that the male monster could be taught to associate happiness with a perfect underdone steak, and that little children looking on a well-cooked, well-carved goose would be in a mood to lead better lives.

Her great undertaking seems all the more heroic when we remember that the nation she wished to educate was the most barbarous in regard to cookery that had ever set out to reform the planet. She saw with horror young Englishmen being driven to all parts of the earth by the cookery in their homes, and realised that wherever the English flag went English cookery in all its vileness would probably go with it. She foresaw the possibility of a world in which discontent would become more and more widespread with the spread of the British Empire and its cuisine. She was dismayed, we may take it, by the thought that Englishmen would go all over the world teaching the heathen in his blindness how not to cook a cabbage, how not to make rice pudding, how not to make coffee. So she sat down and wrote a book which has been described by a character in one of Conan Doyle's novels as containing "more wisdom to the square inch than any work of man." Her publishers justly remark that this is "a wonderful testimonial when one remembers that the edition thus praised contained more than 80,000 square inches of closely packed information."

There may, I agree, come a time when the humanitarians will discover a dark side to the work of Mrs. Beeton: I can imagine a vegetarian world which will read with horror the list of her recommended dishes—moulded mincemeat (see beef cake), noisettes of beef with mushrooms, noisettes of beef with parsley butter, ox-cheek mould, ox-cheek stewed, ox-cheek stuffed, ox-liver roasted, ox-palates stewed, ox-tail broiled, ox-tail stewed, palates (beef), pickle for beef, pickled round for hanging, porterhouse steak, and so on. The list shocks the imagination almost like cannibalism. And I confess that her advice on carving savours a little of an orgy in an ogre's castle. "The carving of loins and necks of either veal, mutton, or lamb," she writes, "must in some measure be determined by the size of the joints, but if the butcher has separated the chine bone into narrow divisions, the carver should have no difficulty in cutting suitable portions. He can then cut between the bones." Again, "the cut should be direct, sharp and incisive. A saw-like action should never enter into the operation." Operation, indeed. It sounds horribly like it.

Mrs. Beeton, however, must be judged by the standards, not of Utopia, but of her own age and ours. And praise cannot be withheld from her as the supreme champion of a lost cause—the instruction of the English people in the art of cookery. I will not say that English cookery has positively declined since the publication of her book, but I know a good many hotels at which it can never have been worse. Mrs. Beeton, I am afraid, preached to deaf ears. Like other great teachers, she is revered, and her advice is ignored. She is, judged by results, the greatest failure of the nineteenth century. May the celebration of her centenary bring about a change of heart in a mighty and ill-fed nation!

Y. Y.

MEN AND MEASURES

Dedicated to Messrs. Churchill, Lloyd George, Hoover and Roosevelt, and whomsoever it may concern.

A PATIENT, at the point of death,
Might pardonably be annoyed
If, while he struggled hard for breath,
Doctors and surgeons were employed
In fierce and loud recrimination
About his treatment in the past,
And who should undertake at last
The necessary operation.
He well might say, "I don't care who
Cures me, so long as I pull through."

Just so, we folk, who feel the pinch,
Regard the virulent debates
Concerning who agreed to clinch
That famous bargain with the States,
And whether new negotiations
Shall seek to readjust the claim
In Hoover's, or in Roosevelt's name—
We don't care much for reputations.
If any one can pull us through,
That's all we want—no matter who.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

THE GAGGING ACT

To the Editor of The New Statesman and Nation.

Sir,—The arrest of Tom Mann and Emrhys Llewellyn a fortnight ago and their imprisonment for two months, although (as Sir Chartres Biron is reported to have said) there "was no criminal charge against them," is only the latest item in the series of prosecutions, imprisonments, and heavy fines, which have this winter been inflicted upon the unemployed and their leaders and advocates.

In most places the unemployed have absolutely no means of making themselves heard except by speaking directly to the passers-by at street meetings, or by calling attention to what they want to say by their sheer weight of numbers, as in a hunger march or a demonstration. Thus to forbid these means of expression in the case of the unemployed is to muzzle them completely and in fact to establish an extremely severe form of censorship. And yet few would deny that they have at least a case to put before their governors and their fellow citizens—as when, for instance, they point out how much public money glances off the unemployed man and his family into the pockets of the landlords, with regard to whose need thus to receive such public money in the form of rent there is no means test, or when they try to show that they can no more feed a child properly on 2s. a week than could we or any other reader of The New Statesman and Nation.

It is with considerable disquiet that we see a National Government attempting to suppress the views of any body of its subjects, and especially that which has fewest opportunities of making itself articulate.

19 Glebe Place, S.W.3.

Amabel Williams-Ellis.
Storm Jameson.
Vera Brittain.

MR. KEYNES'S PROPOSALS

To the Editor of The New Statesman and Nation.

Sir,—I have read the interesting proposal, in Mr. Keynes's article on the World Economic Conference, for a large issue by the Bank for International Settlements (or a new institution to be created for the purpose) of certificates to be accepted, under legislation of the participating countries, as the lawful equivalent of gold for all contractual and monetary purposes.

I take it as certain that there would be a great deal of discussion and hesitation and consequent delay before a proposal of this kind would be accepted by the Conference, and I write to suggest that the way might be paved by the adoption of a preliminary plan of a more modest kind, which might be proceeded with at once, without even waiting for the meeting of the World Economic Conference, and need involve little hesitation or discussion.

This plan is that the Bank for International Settlements should be empowered to make a limited issue of currency notes secured for their whole amount by an equal sum in gold, which would be held by the Bank and entrusted to it by the Central Banks of the principal countries in agreed proportions and on agreed terms.

This plan would have the following advantages:

1. It would provide means for solution, in advance of any larger and more ambitious plan, of the technical problems connected with the issue of notes by the Bank for International Settlements, such as their name, amounts, and terms of issue, and the determination of the ratio of their equivalence to the various national currencies.

2. It would familiarise the people of the various countries with the idea and use of an international currency managed by a Bank in which the central issuing banks of the principal countries co-operate.

3. It would enable the governments of all or any countries to push on with any necessary legislation for making the notes of the Bank for International Settlements legal currency for tendering in their respective countries.

4. It would permit these steps to be taken in relation to an issue of notes which should inspire unquestioning confidence because they would be backed by a hundred per cent. of gold.

Palace Chambers, S.W.1. F. N. Keen.

ANTI-MILITARISM IN GERMANY

To the Editor of The New Statesman and Nation.

Sir,—I think readers of The New Statesman and Nation may be interested to read the terms of a manifesto just published in Germany in the *Mitteilungen des Bundes für radikale Ethik* (Dec., 1932).

> Against the Reintroduction of Universal Conscription.
>
> It is only natural that a big, conquered, and partially disarmed State should raise the demand for equality of armaments against victorious States who still remain fully armed. The demand, even without the support of Treaties, arises from a sense of justice. The claim of the present German Government that disarmament should take place in the other States on the same scale as that which was forced upon Germany is perfectly justified and we endorse it.
>
> But we take our stand most emphatically against this Government, if, in case of a refusal of its just demand, it resorts to measures which, in spite of all sophistries, amount to nothing more or less than taking up arms. Armaments do not safeguard peace, but are a direct menace to it, in that they act as a challenge to the opponent. The unswerving will-to-peace of a disarmed nation is a moral weapon more powerful than the strongest army. We condemn war as the most horrible and senseless of all crimes, and with it all preparations for war; we consider it as our duty both to our nation and to humanity to prevent the next war which is threatening; it is our passionate desire to fulfil this duty to the utmost. Through the fault of the imperialists the establishment of world-peace is moving far too slowly; it must not receive a set-back through the taking up of arms in Germany. We do not want an empty national policy of prestige, but one that shall safeguard humanity.
>
> Above all, we object most strongly to the proposed plan of reintroducing conscription into Germany under the guise of a "militia"—that ignominious State-slavery by which men are officially compelled to kill innocent human beings and suffer death themselves on behalf of alien interests and ideas of which they themselves disapprove. We, who are asking for the abolition of conscription in the victorious countries, declare that a return to this system, which is being planned in Germany, ~~is an~~ execrable attack on the freedom of the individual and on the idea of international peace. And this is what we expect of the young German conscientious objectors should any attempt be made to force them into that most barbarous of all servitudes: that they should prove themselves upholders of their convictions by refusing as one man to obey the call to arms. Only so can war be effectually outlawed.

This manifesto is signed by a number of "Revolutionary Pacifists," among them Kurt Hiller, Ernst Toller, Eugen Brehm, Rudolf Leonhard, etc., and also by a number of prominent women, such as Anita Augspurg, Auguste Kirchhoff, and finally by Magnus Schwantje, the editor of the above journal and secretary of the Bund für Radikale Ethik.

Sylvia Colenso.

THE EAST END

To the Editor of The New Statesman and Nation.

Sir,—Dr. Harry Roberts is to be thanked for calling attention to the newest phase in poverty. He speaks from many years' experience in the East End of London, I from more than thirty years in a typical Midland industrial town. As he suggests, old-time destitution has almost disappeared: but it is being replaced rapidly by something even worse. You may call it, if you will, spiritual poverty. It is bred of repeated disappointment: it is fostered by diminishing hope. A man said to me the other day, "I think work's gone out." He implied a growing feeling of despair, that it is no use trying any longer.

In these parts actual destitution was rife in the years following the Boer War. Families moved two or three into a house. Furniture was parted with. So late as 1912, the year of the Tube Strike, the average wage for labourers was 18s.; and a single week of general stoppage called for the soup kitchens, which were set up promptly. Yet neither the working man nor his wife was hopeless. They looked for the good times which would come, and actually did come for many before long.

For some the good time has continued, particularly girls, whose standards have soared and have not come down. But for very many of the older men the good time is little more than a rather bitter memory. They have nothing to do, and they see no prospect of finding anything to do. They are losing heart.

Our overcrowding is not Dr. Roberts' overcrowding; but for all that the other day I found a family of twelve sleeping in one room and a half—father, mother and two babies at the head of a bed: two girls at the foot: three boys in another bed: three more in a bed in a landing room. Father, needless to say, was "on the Labour." That was bad; but not nearly so bad as the fact that that man and many of his mates have nothing to look for but spells of being "on the Labour" tempered with other spells when they will be "on the Assistance" (they used to call it "the Parish").

Of course, the trouble, as Dr. Roberts points out, is that people now know, as they did not know formerly, what it is they are missing.

Walsall. FRANK G. LAYTON.

THE SLUM PROBLEM

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am unable to understand how "Citizen" justifies his attack upon jerry-builders. Slums are created by the scum who occupy these houses and who have already fouled their homes provided for them by the L.C.C., as witness the disgraceful scenes on the Becontree Estate recently. I would remind Mr. Citizen that the persecuted property owner has to comply first with regard to the exterior of the house—with the District Surveyor's orders.

Second, with regard to the interior of the house—with the Sanitary Inspector's orders, whereas no responsibility is placed upon the scum who will occupy these (clean) jerry-built houses and make slums of them, thanks to our vindictive socialistic legislation. The housing question is surely a disgrace to the tenants of this country, and the remedy lies in making more owner-occupiers.

Builder, Alderney House, CHARLES T. PATIENT.
76 Alderney Street, S.W.1.

THE NEW REVIVALISM

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It may well be true, as Canon Streeter said, that "all live movements attract into their orbit cranks, weaklings and neurotics." But what if the only "life" that the New Revivalism contains is that of the abnormal specimens he mentions? Can we call that a live movement which interprets its slogan, "absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love," to mean the absolute negation of one's own individual responsibility, and a denial of the intellect, or its value? The greatest danger of the movement (as one of your correspondents has before pointed out), if greater danger there can be than two such tendencies, is the assumption by Buchmanites that they themselves, as such, are absolutely honest, pure, unselfish and loving. Surely this is but the wish-fulfilment of a weakling? A. DUSCHINSKY.

257 Goldhurst Terrace,
West Hampstead.

ENGLISH PROSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I don't know what I can do about it now, except ask Mr. Brophy to recommend me a good cheap typewriter. Would your compositor make one last despairing effort: Professorial, *not* Professional. BARRINGTON GATES.

Firgrove, Ash Vale, Surrey.

THE GAZE OF GIOTTO

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have been much entertained by W. J. Turner's engaging impertinence, "The Gaze of Giotto." He tells us that the "enormous *mythology* Christianity is not yet ready for the poets" (it goes better in prose). So we are left to deduce that Chaucer, Crashaw, Francis Thompson, and Gerard Hopkins are not poets. Again, "only the painters were free of belief or unbelief and could draw their souls." Therefore Fra Angelico, Giotto, Michelangelo were, in spite of the testimonies they have left, not only in paint but in word, without faith.

Soon after the war I, thinking myself to be a composer, gave a concert of my works at the Aeolian Hall, London. Mr. Turner advised me to give up composing and, instead, to launch battleships. His conclusion was an odd one, though he was perfectly right in detecting a lack of real creative ability in my music. May I now, in my turn, advise him to give up theology and make a pilgrimage to Assisi with peas in his shoes?

Collegio Beda, ALEC ROBERTSON.
Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, Rome.

Miscellany

VAUGHAN NASH

SINCE his death on December 15th, a good deal has been written about the earlier life of Vaughan Nash, his days at Toynbee Hall, his part in the great Dock Strike, and his service as Private Secretary to two Prime Ministers, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Asquith. Too little has been said, however, of his later activities as Vice-Chairman of the Development Commission, and a moving spirit in the revival of the countryside.

The Development Commission was a by-product of Mr. Lloyd George's famous Budget of 1909; a new State Department charged with the development of agriculture, fisheries, and rural industries. As its first chief official, Vaughan Nash moulded it in his own likeness, making it modest, unassuming, but fundamentally sound, and exercising a far wider influence than appeared on the surface. Nash was the very antithesis of a soulless bureaucrat, and finding it his congenial duty to give assistance to agricultural research, to fisheries, and to rural industries, he characteristically did far more than came within the scope of his official brief, and devoted himself, in his own time, both before and after retirement, to the service of workers in these fields. Thus it was that Stephen Reynolds, when he came up to London full of enthusiasm for the fishermen with whom he had made a home in Devonshire, found only two officials who satisfied his demand for sympathetic understanding of the human side of fishery problems—one was Mr. H. G. Maurice, the Fisheries Secretary, and the other was Vaughan Nash.

Taking a very broad view of his obligation to assist in the development of rural industries, Vaughan Nash showed an initiative and a constructive imagination which have already been justified by results, though their full harvest has yet to be reaped. Some ten or twelve years ago, seeing the possibilities of an immense stimulus to village life through a revival of country craftsmanship, and the importance of sound guidance in design and technique, he founded the Rural Industries Bureau, which is governed by a voluntary Committee, and financed from the Development Fund. Working in close co-operation with the Rural Community Councils, this Bureau has, through its technical advisers, been able to render the greatest assistance to isolated country craftsmen, and has gradually built up a substantial output of really fine workmanship. It is largely through the efforts of the Bureau that the famous quilts, in traditional designs, from the mining villages of Durham and South Wales, which are among the most beautiful things produced in Britain, have become known to the general public; and a like service has been rendered in regard to ornamental ironwork from village forges, hand-made furniture, Welsh tweeds, basketry, pottery, and many other products of the countryside.

It was not considered proper, however, that the Bureau, which obtains its funds from the Government, should participate in trading, and since the marketing side was essential to the success of the whole movement, Vaughan Nash, in his private capacity, created another body to fill the gap. This was Country Industries, Ltd., a society financed from private sources (mainly by Nash and his friends), which maintains a permanent exhibition of the work of country craftsmen, for sale, at 26, Eccleston Street, near Victoria Station. After he retired from the Vice-Chairmanship of the Development Commission, Vaughan Nash devoted an immense amount of time and thought and energy to the affairs of this Society, which, like many more ambitious enterprises, has been going through a difficult time in the slump. He had the satisfaction of knowing that, despite these difficulties, a steady and increasing sale of craftsmen's work was taking place, and gradually establishing the Society on a self-supporting basis.

All this may seem rather small beer, but there was nothing mean or petty in the mind or character of Vaughan Nash, and to those who worked with him at these tasks the smallest details were made important and interesting by his vision of a better England, his sensitive and discriminating enthusiasm for fine workmanship, and by the pleasure of being associated with a man of his culture, delicate perception, and self-effacing devotion to the service of others.

HAROLD WRIGHT.

THE UPRIGHT MAN

CALVERT was an upright man, tall, shy, short-stepping. His eyes were lowered and his narrow shoulders square. Proud in his poverty he kept to himself, he feared to know himself to be known. He came to the office punctually, he hung up his rain-coat and hat in the cloakroom reserved for the male staff, he changed into a grey jacket in order to save his better one, he used his own towel when he washed his thin hands. He did not stand as the other clerks did, with dejected buttocks to the cashier's fire, defying him in his absence and scattering to their stools when the blowing of a nose announced that he had arrived. Calvert did not spend himself in gestures or extravagances. He kept himself apart. He went straight to his desk, took out his blotting paper, cleaned his pens, took down his books and, before all others, bent his body and bowed his head. The clerks smiled at him. He was fair.

The carpenter bends over his bench, the cobbler over his shoe, the mechanic over his machine, the priest over his altar, the clerk over his desk. By day, the heads of all men are bowed and their bodies bent. Not one of them is upright. Yet Calvert, the first to bow, was an upright man. Soldierly in duty, remembering his mother, scrupulous in poverty, when others laughed only smiling, saying two words while others spoke ten, eating sparingly alone, secret in life and parsimonious of himself. He trod the path of a single preoccupation, an instinctive loneliness. He conserved himself, every sinew was restraining. There were iron bars to the windows of his office. Through them if a bowed man looked up, he saw not the sky but across the street the flat walls of windows where other bowed men worked.

At first he had been restless, his mouth had the desire to speak, his legs fidgeted on the stool—the chains unfamiliar—his hands reckoning his money, his grey eyes looking at the window-bars for a space to squeeze through and escape. "Calvert," the cashier warned him. And the chant of the office went on. He bowed his head and ducked with the rest repentant. Then cautiously at 22 he let a little of himself go. He lit his eyes, guiltily conscient of his mother and their poverty, permitted himself a little of the great secrecy of love. He cautiously looked up at the bars expecting to see a miracle, a vision, the appearance of an angel. For months he continued this deep espionage. No vision came. He bowed his head at last. He was an upright man.

Now there were two women, his mother and this other. It was his duty not to look up. She and he must save themselves. They must not speak too much, nor smile too much, nor touch too much each other's skin, in case they should love too much and exclaim out of their hearts, How long the old live! They sat in the evenings with his mother and with hers, looking through the fine lace curtains to the sky, waiting for the miracle. But there was no sky. There were the walls of lace curtains in the houses opposite and behind them invisible presences looking up. For ten years looking through lace curtains for a miracle they brought laughter to others.

Clerks flung their lives about and committed follies. One married to a voracious wife drank on Thursdays a glass of stout. One who copied weighing slips gave imitations of the voice of the cashier. One who was bald put his hand down the blouse of his secretary and was slapped in the face. One would absent himself for twenty minutes in the morning to read the newspaper in the lavatory. One going deaf turned to an Oriental religion. One made use of the office telephone to communicate with a bookmaker. One told the Port of London Authority of an error in demurrage: it was his own. One staying after six lit his pipe. The oldest, in charge of stamps, went up in an aeroplane for a few minutes at a resort: he had married a widow. But Calvert did not so defy the gods, his gaolers.

So the gods, his gaolers, got drunk and went mad. They opened the doors of the cell, they flung in the keys. "You are not a slave. You are not a tame man," they whispered in his ears. "You are a beast and brute fighting for survival. You have saved yourself too long. Go outside," they said to him, patting him on the back. "Stand out in the air, draw yourself up to your full height, take a deep breath. Do you see? You are a man already. Your pale face is tanned by the sun, your neck is golden. Your hair which had gone dead and greasy is alive again like corn. Your shoulders are like walls, your muscles are hard. Do not lower your eyes! Do not bow your head any more! That day has passed and gone. My dear fellow, those red spots in front of your eyes have nothing to do with your liver, they are made of blood."

"Blood?" murmured Calvert incredulously.

"Yes, yes," they said. "Blood. Life. You're a hero. Go and kill."

Women, above all, they said, expected this of him. Now was the time to save nothing but to spend all.

He mistrusted them until they said, remembering his tradition, that it was his duty. He had bowed but now at last had come the time of freedom and uprightness.

And indeed the whole world of men was changed. The carpenter no longer bent over his bench, nor the mechanic over his screw, nor the cobbler at his last, nor the clerk at his desk. There were not many bowed men. They were all upright, bolt upright, chins up, shoulders back, forefinger on the seam of trousers, and they marched on grass under the sky. Like upright gods they marched, strong, healthy and beautiful. Women watched them. They would never go back, they said. Many indeed did not.

For it appeared that this was a trick. They were made to stand in rows in trenches as they had sat in rows at desks, but the pens they now used required two arms to lift. The cashiers had three stripes on their arms, the partners red bands to their hats. The bars of the office windows had become bars of wire. Accounts were opened and kept, but not of bales. It soon became the habit not to be an upright man but to duck the head once more. Looking at the sky they saw miracles but they were sulphurous, and there was a tone of hoarse, consumptive wailing in the voices of the angels as they passed over to be entertained unawares.

But Calvert was an upright man. He had waited long with great passion. He had waited to make a life for himself. He had come to the end of his loneliness. Recklessly he talked, loudly he laughed. He entered into fellowship. He had to spend himself and all his life, to laugh with his whole body, to love and die and live again with his whole nature. This was a supreme duty. All his life he had waited, to stand in all his stature and fullness, attending the Passion. And after sundown between the lights of day and night when the bowed men stand up, he looked up through the wire bars at the sky, and the miracle occurred. He was shot by a sniper in the head.

First of all it was as if, angered with his standing, the earth had swung up with all its metals like a pick and hit with full might upon the head, that his life leapt from his feet and all parts of his body to that place. He fell. It seemed he was whipped off his feet while his head pealed like a helpless belfry. Now there was nothing left of him, he was scattered into fragments, and flung together in an iron ball of pain, to be struck and struck until he broke into nothing but clangorous and bloody echoes; and then great toothed pliers picked him up by the skull and flung him away down into a black pit that had no end to it and measured only by the wail of his pain as he dropped down. He had not imagined a death so extravagant.

They carried Calvert away on a stretcher. He was written off the books. His name appeared in many entries. By goods, cash. His account closed, he entered into heaven where all men were lying down full length and only the angels bowed their heads over them. For a long time the hammer-on-anvil clangour of the earth was there, but slowly as he sank into heaven there was the tolerable melody of bells and endurable singing. God came in white coat and held his head together by the pressure of his hands so that these sounds died, and after God had held his head it was rigid. Calvert slept, and in his sleep lived many lives and enacted dreams. After many months his eyes, which had long been open, saw a white ceiling and a human face looking down at him. He closed his eyes, unwilling to return from the fevers of heaven from which he was drifting on the sweet stream of sleep. He could have wept that he was not dead. When again he opened his eyes two women were looking at him. One of them was old and one desired. "Save yourself," their eyes pleaded. He had nothing now to save. He had spent. "Do not let him bend his head," they said in one voice. "HE CANNOT MOVE HIS HEAD," said the doctor. "The bullet is still in it."

At this the gods sobered and grabbed back the keys. "All men to the cells," they said. "All men back to the bars. No more holidays—work!" The clerks in this new freedom were gay. One who had come to suspect Divine Justice took to games of chance. One who was bald consummated love with a telephone operator and was presented with a clock on his marriage; one saddened by an adding machine took drugs which gave him visions; one moved into a town whose train service had been electrified; one who could imitate the voice of the cashier played in an orchestra; one sold his house at a profit; a typist given to the circulation of religious pamphlets had a week's leave to serve on a jury; many grew flowers and had new-born children.

But what can a man do in the world who cannot bend his head? Even the inspired blind who are led erect, tapping, can bend their heads and work. They can lean down to kiss, they can grope into the convulsions of love. But a man screwed upright by a bullet in his head, a bullet like the clot of a spirit level to be steadily carried, cannot bend over tools or ledger, nor grovel with fingers.

In this new world returning to life Calvert walked now rigid as the memory of the fear of death. Eyes now wide open, face narrow, shoulders fixed, body bleak, he was fixed in uprightness for ever. Many pitied him. But life requires pliable men. Regimentation of the pliable, they said; it was the lesson of the war. All must bend to the wheel together. No head out of alignment.

What could he do, fixed now in the discipline of uprightness for ever, not of men, lately of heaven but not of the angels, needing to eat? He sank from plane to plane. There were two women. He had been, he said, staring, a clerk. He went from place to place asking. "There," they said, "that is what you can do." He could go from place to place, he could be a pair of hands, impersonal. Take this. Bring that. Fetch me. . . . Give him. . . . A messenger, walking from room to room, standing in lifts, waiting at desks, an intermediary, lifeless. Not a live man, not a dead man, a man now without all means of desiring anything, a man indelibly alone not looking up nor down. An upright man.

V. S. PRITCHETT.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Boucicault without Tears

THE Streets of London at the Ambassadors is a simple-hearted joke for the half-sophisticated, lasting a great deal too long. Burlesquing Victorian melodrama was a funnier operation in 1925 than it is now, and the occasions so conscientiously taken are so obvious that within half an hour you find yourself tacitly evading each successive attempt to make you laugh in an endeavour to imagine how Boucicault himself intended his play to be performed. One gathers from a programme note that there is more wholesome piety in Mr. W. A. Darlington's racy adaptation than appears in the production, and there are one or two performances which suggest that the serious possibilities which were grasped so readily by another generation of players have not yet vanished altogether. The real problem, of course, is to find actors with sufficiently highly coloured personalities to make the surrender of our common sense worth while; and we have probably been chasing the naturalistic will-o'-the-wisp too long for that. Burlesque apart, the situations follow one another in a fine bustle of action, the platitudes are far more sensible and less high falutin than one expects, and there is a suggestion of Elizabethan gusto about the whole affair which at moments makes the complacent laughter of the audience ring a little hollow. It is probable that the Victorians got a good deal more fun out of their own particular kind of nonsense than we do out of ours. The burlesque, which is really the only point of this production, is carried out earnestly by Mr. Harold Warrender, juvenile lead, and lavishly by Miss Sydney Fairbrother as a high-born widow in distress. Mr. Sam Livesey, less determined to be funny, wears the green spotlight of a wicked life with magnificent bravura, and Margaretta Scott and Alexander Field give excellent performances which are to all intents "straight."

Blood and Fun.

Sweeney Todd at the Kingsway Theatre is everything a melodrama should be. The villains are the bloodiest, the jokes the most uproarious, the murders and rescues the most splendidly ridiculous, the trapdoor the most obvious, the heroine the loveliest and the hero the most heroic. No improbability is omitted (but we really do want to know how the demon barber comes to overlook the disappearance of the hero he thinks he has just murdered), and the whole thing is so funny that pantomime seems solemn in comparison. The audience enjoyed itself in the proper spirit, cheering the hero, hissing the villains and sobbing with the heroine. Sweeney Todd, Mrs. Lovett (whose horrible pies taste good when eaten in the intervals), Mark Imgestre, Pearly Tanner and Tobias Wragg are outstanding performances in a cast which is good throughout. Johanna, the heroine, plays excellently, but she is not "period" enough. Mr. Tod Slaughter and his Barnstormers should carry the West End with a single assault.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, December 31st—
"Messiah," Royal Choral Society and London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Malcolm Sargent, Albert Hall, 2.30.

Sunday, January 1st—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "Hopes and Fears for 1933," Conway Hall, 11.

R. D. Stocker on Shaw's "Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God." Hampstead Ethical Society, 158A Mill Lane, N.W., 6.15.

Monday, January 2nd—
Exhibition of Modern Photography, 35, Russell Square, W.C.
Basil de Selincourt on "New Books," B.B.C., 6.50.

Tuesday, January 3rd—
P. Noel Baker on "Peace and Disarmament: What We Have *Not* Done in 1932," Friends House, Euston Square, 1.20.

Wednesday, January 4th—
E. M. Delafield on "Reading and Everyday Life," B.B.C., 10.45 a.m.

J. M. Keynes and Sir Josiah Stamp on "Spending or Saving," B.B.C., 9.10 p.m.

Thursday, January 5th—
New Education Fellowship. Address by Lord Allen of Hurtwood, Mechanics Theatre, University College, Gower St., 5.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

SIR RAYMOND BEAZLEY, Professor of History at the University of Birmingham, has written an incisive and valuable handbook on the origins of the Great European War. It is called *The Road to Ruin in Europe*, and is published by Messrs. Dent for the price of 3s. 6d. It will provide Dr. Alfred von Wegerer, Count Max Montgelas, and the other propagandists of the Kriegsschuldfrage with material even more welcome than that which, during the last few years, they have been publishing in the *Berliner Monatshefte*. It is impossible to contend that Sir Raymond Beazley is incorrect in any of his statements or deductions. His case, from a certain point of view, is incontrovertible. Yet it remains a certain point of view. It does credit to his Europeanism and his humanity. It does even more credit to his desire and capacity for the truth. The only question I should raise is whether this book is, from the point of view of the historian, quite as balanced as it appears. We may well share the resentment of Sir Raymond at all the lies which we have been told about the sole responsibility of Germany for the catastrophe of 1914. We may well hesitate to assert that our own Government and officials were quite so innocent and pacific as the documents would have us believe. We may well regret as a clumsy and hysterical gesture that paragraph of the Versailles Treaty which forced Germany to admit a guilt which she did not either feel or deserve. We may well look back with shame and unhappiness upon the khaki election of 1918 and the slogans which were then produced. We may feel, even, that Russia and Austria-Hungary were more responsible for the war than was Germany, and that the timid imprecisions of our own Cabinet do not shine as rubies in the diadem of English history. Yet, in spite of these reservations, we may find it difficult to believe that had Bülow been a trifle less conceited and Tirpitz a trifle less powerful the war of 1914-1918 would never have occurred.

* * *

Not that Sir Raymond Beazley seeks to defend German policy. Far from it. He admits its "astonishing unwisdom," its "strange myopia," its "foolish excesses of suspicion and ungraciousness," "the wooden disinclination of many German leaders to negotiate or to pause," its "tragic blindness," its "instability, uncertainty, petulance and captiousness." He admits also the "exaggeration, hysteria, untruth and injustice" of herd emotions. He draws attention to the official hypocrisies (such as that of the Agadir excitement) which these emotions produced. He confesses that Bülow did not always rise to the level of his own intelligence. He is by no means blind to the fact that the propaganda of the German Navy League created a largely artificial animosity. He recognises that the eleventh-hour loyalty—that fateful Nibelungentreue—of the German Cabinet allowed the reins to fall too loosely into the hands of the Haus am Ballplatz. Yet he implies that these defects, and the errors of omission which they produced, were due to a quite pacific and almost amiable lack of vision on the part of the directors of German policy. Obviously he is right in contending that Germany did not desire to provoke a war with France, Great Britain, and Russia. But is he equally right in suggesting that Germany was not mainly responsible for creating the conditions—or let us call it the atmosphere—in which such a war became inevitable? I am not convinced.

* * *

In his wholly laudable desire to explode the legend of German war-guilt Sir Raymond Beazley is tempted at moments to paint the grey tones of British policy with too dark a brush. It seems an exaggeration, for instance, to describe our loss of faith in splendid isolation as "the new but overpowering anxiety of British imperialism to possess a great military and political alliance." It seems an exaggeration, again, to describe King Edward as "the supreme arbiter of foreign policy." King Edward served as an admirable lubricant to British diplomacy: he was at no time its essential motive power. Again, is Sir Raymond Beazley being quite fair, quite scientific, when he implies that the German proposal of March, 1912, to the effect that we should promise neutrality in the event of a war not provoked by Germany, was a sane and reasonable proposal? Is it wholly unprejudiced on his part to ascribe the rejection of that proposal to a disinclination on the part of Sir Edward Grey "to limit his freedom to support France against Germany"? Surely no British Cabinet could possibly, at that date, have agreed to furnish to Germany the blank cheque which she then, so arrogantly, demanded? Is Sir Raymond being wholly moderate when he contends that the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia has been "the subject of malicious and absurd exaggeration"? It is possible to argue that Austria was justified in her desire to suppress Serbia once and for all: but it is scarcely permissible to contend that the ultimatum was not in itself a monstrous document deliberately contrived to provoke hostilities. The memoirs of Conrad von Hoetzendorff and Musulin convince us that the ultimatum was never intended to be the basis of any diplomatic negotiation. Is it possible, again, to absolve the German Government from all responsibility for the rejection of Sir Edward Grey's attempts at mediation? I do not think so. I fear that on these points I am unable to see Sir Edward Grey quite as black, or the Wilhelmstrasse quite as white, as Sir Raymond would have us suppose.

* * *

Although, therefore, many of us will hesitate to follow Sir Raymond Beazley throughout the whole course of his argument, yet we must admit that this astringent summary will go far to remove much of the whitewash with which we have sought to daub our own pre-war policy. He is right, for instance, in contending that the Anglo-French Entente of 1904 was no mere piece of amiable reconciliation, but "the announcement of a tremendous change in the European position." He is right in contending that the annexation of Bosnia in 1908 was neither so horrible, nor so unexpected an event as the Entente diplomatists made out. He is right in recognising that the nations of Europe had already drifted into "currents of jealousy, hatred, distrust and dread" towards the cataracts from which there would, even had the tragedy of Sarajevo never occurred, have been no escape. He is abundantly right in arguing that the pro-Entente group in England would have wished for war against Germany even if Belgium had never come into the question. It is strange, in fact, that Sir Raymond Beazley does not press this point further. It surely constitutes one of the most damning indictments against the sincerity of the Cabinet then in power. They had known for years that, under the Schlieffen plan, Germany would attack France through Belgium. Their whole preparations had been based upon just this assumption. Yet when the expected happened they held up their hands in righteous and astonished horror. Here, surely, was a gesture of hypocrisy more questionable than any discretion regarding Anglo-Russian naval conversations. I cannot but feel that Sir Raymond Beazley, in his belief in a deliberate policy of encirclement, has disregarded the more subconscious faults of British pre-war policy. I trust that in the more detailed work which he has promised us he will devote his great powers of assimilation and synthesis to a criticism of our moral timidity and our resultant imprecisions and cant. The fundamental error of British policy was that it sought to ride the two horses of conciliation and menace. As a result, neither our threats nor our overtures carried conviction. There were

two policies open to us. Either we might have made it absolutely clear that we would support France and Russia against Germany, or else we might have made it absolutely clear that we would do nothing of the sort. We did neither; we gave the impression at Berlin that we would maintain our neutrality; and we gave the impression in Paris and St. Petersburg that in the last resort they could rely on our assistance. The faults of British policy are seldom to be sought for in evil intentions: they arise rather from weak optimism and selfish imprecisions. Herein lies the essence of our own war-guilt. And herein the thesis which Sir Raymond Beazley is so qualified to expound.

HAROLD NICOLSON.

REVIVALISM

Pugin: A Mediaeval Victorian. By MICHAEL TRAPPES-LOMAX. Sheed and Ward. 15s.

The Pre-Raphaelite Comedy. By FRANCIS BICKLEY. Constable. 10s.

Pugin was born in 1812, at the age of fifteen he designed some of the Gothic furniture for Wyatville's Windsor, in 1835 he became a Catholic, he was three times married, and he died in 1852. His life is a tragic farce, for he was a man of one idea. He became conscious of failure, and he died mad. "There is nothing worth living for but Christian architecture and a boat," he said. Christian architecture is of course Gothic. Pugin had for Gothic a passion that became an obsession: Gothic was the supreme expression of truth and beauty, and as it had been invented by Catholics, Catholics must have the truth. So Pugin was received into the Church of Rome. He woke to find himself among people whose ideal of religious art was something very like the Brompton Oratory. He made a pilgrimage to Rome, but "every hour he spent there he felt endangered his faith." Being found absorbed in prayer in St. Peter's, he explained that he was thanking God because he thought he had observed a crack in the dome. To him not only the pointed arch but the necessity of rood-screen seemed "of faith" in the same sense as the doctrine of the Trinity. "A man may be judged by his feeling for Plain Chaunt," he said. "If he likes Mozart, he is no chancel and screen man." But the clergy liked Mozart. Again he wrote in despair:

> I am sick at heart. The apathy of the Catholic body on these things is alarming. I had formed dreams of returning glory; but if this censure of the Propaganda is persisted in after the remonstrance which has been sent, I shall abandon all my hopes. I see everything that we had hoped dashed to pieces. Do not deceive yourself, my dear friend, do not deceive yourself: the Catholics will cut their own throats, the clergy will put down religion. These are hard sayings, but they are twice mad fools. . . .

All that had happened was that Rome had discountenanced Pugin's desire to substitute Gothic vestments for the fiddle-shaped chasubles and cottas of Counter-Reformation usage. Towards the end of his life Pugin began to notice that converted Tractarians had been "three times as Catholic in their ideas before they were reconciled to the Church." The truth is that Pugin would have been far happier as an Anglican. He could have abused the ecclesiastical authorities with a good conscience, and among Anglo-Catholics he would have found a proper interest in the exact restoration of mediæval ritual. The Church of Rome is no place for those who look backward. It moves with the times, and when the times are vulgar, it has bad taste too.

Interesting as a man, Pugin is depressing as an artist. "I have passed my life in thinking of fine things, studying fine things, designing fine things, and realising very poor ones." Half his buildings have already been destroyed, and they are probably no loss. He made pleasant drawings, but he seems to have had none of the architect's feeling for mass and space. It is significant that Mr. Trappes-Lomax, who tries (I fancy without much conviction) to make a case for him, includes no photographs of his buildings among his illustrations: Mr. Kenneth Clark's admirable book on the Gothic Revival was also illustrated only with drawings. It is unlucky that enthusiasts for the Gothic Revival should prefer not to show the buildings they praise as these really are. It is a mistake for a biographer to show contempt for his sitter, and one is grateful to Mr. Trappes-Lomax for doing his best by Pugin. But I think he is unfair to Barry. Pugin admittedly did an enormous amount of work for the Houses of Parliament, but it is fair to say that everything good about that building is Barry's, and almost everything bad, Pugin's. Mr. Trappes-Lomax found most of his material ready to hand in Ferrey's fascinating Recollections, but he has made of it a most entertaining and recommendable book.

Mr. Francis Bickley's book is equally enjoyable. He is extremely well informed, he has some new information, and, unlike most people who have written about the Pre-Raphaelites, he understands painting and has few illusions about their aesthetic importance. The best thing he can find to say of the movement is that "there was in it something essentially congenial to our English temper." Presumably that something is the muddle-headedness which likes to confuse æsthetic and moral issues. Many people imagine that Pre-Raphaelitism was a movement of revival inspired by an admiration for the Italian Primitives and Quatrocentists. In point of fact none of the Brotherhood seems to have known or cared much about early Italian painting, and I cannot make out that any of them ever went to Italy. Rossetti certainly did not; and when he went with Holman Hunt to Paris, they liked Hippolyte Flandrin's pictures in St. Germain des Près better than anything they saw in the Louvre. Ford Madox Brown it is true was influenced by the German Nazarene School (these were imitators of Perugino who set the fashion in nineteenth-century *bondieuserie*) and he did look at Giottos and Masaccios in Italy, but he preferred Holbein, and in any case he was never elected to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, largely on account of these archaistic leanings.

Like the Gothic Revival, Pre-Raphaelitism was a late fruit of the Romantic Movement, because it was a revolt against the debris of the Grand Manner in painting, like Wordsworth's revolt against the debris of the Grand Manner in verse. The original doctrine was to paint always with an eye on the object, to represent as exactly as possible what the eye saw, to teach good morals, and to obtain bright colour by painting on a white ground. Like Courbet and later the Impressionists, the original Pre-Raphaelites believed in realism, but they took no account of the focusing qualities of the eye and fancied that realism was to be obtained by representing every detail as it appeared upon close inspection. "It is simply fuller Nature we want," Holman Hunt said (and Mr. Bickley is certainly right in making him the Pope of the Movement), "Revivalism whether it be of classicalism or of mediaevalism is a seeking after dry bones." But in effect the Movement, as its name prophesied, did become revivalist. Hunt might go to Jerusalem and paint Palestinian goats from life, but the appeal of the movement lay not in realism but in a glamorous evocation of a more romantic age. The Victorians were becoming disgusted with the ugliness of the industrialism from which they derived their wealth. Ruskin was successfully preaching Gothic revivalism in architecture and chanting the praises of the Primitive painters. His congregation liked Gothic not because it was "true" but because it was poetical, and when he inveighed against mediaevalism in painting, they ceased to attend. If the doctrine of truth to Nature preached by Ruskin and Hunt had been followed logically, it would have developed into Impressionism, but the English as usual preferred romance to realism, and the movement ended in the conscious nostalgia of Morris and Burne-Jones.

Though the history of this perversion of the original Pre-Raphaelite ideal is interesting and significant, it has, of course, no relation to the aesthetic value of the works produced. It is unimportant whether a painter believes in realism or mediaevalism or for that matter in cubism—all that matters is that he should be a good painter. And the trouble with the Pre-Raphaelites is that none of them were very good painters. Holman Hunt was a model of artistic integrity, but he had little talent. Millais had prodigious talent—his early pictures, like *The Blind Girl* at Birmingham, are the best paintings the movement produced, but he lacked integrity, taste and fire. Rossetti was an artist, he had poetic imagination but little of the painter's specific gift. "He was an Italian Prince," Whistler said, "he thought he could do anything, even paint." The other Pre-Raphaelites are unimportant, Deverell, Martineau, Windus, Woolner, Hughes, Stephens Collins and Collinson—I wonder how many people know which of them actually belonged to the Brotherhood. At best their work has a period charm like that of *papier mâché* furniture and wax fruit. Beside these and better than them is Lewis, but his picture in the National Gallery is the only picture by him that I have seen which deserves the high praise Mr. Bickley gives him.

The crazy indignation with which the first Pre-Raphaelite works were received illustrates the English feeling that whatever is unfamiliar must be immoral. The *Athenaeum*, the *Times*, and

Blackwood's rivalled one another in abuse, and Dickens' article on Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents* can be compared with what eminent men of letters said when the first pictures of Cézanne, and Gogh and Matisse were exhibited in London.

When Millais took to painting pictures of the *Bubbles* order, Dickens naturally became one of his warmest admirers. Mr. Bickley writes with the greatest tact about the Pre-Raphaelite tragi-comedy: he has put the qualities required in the historian of Taste. Will he not give us an equally good book about the painters of the latter part of the century?

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

BEHIND THE SCENES OF WAR

Foreign Policy from a Back Bench, 1904-1918: a Study Based on the Papers of Lord Noel-Buxton. By T. P. CONWELL-EVANS. Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

This is not a large book—only 180 pages—but it is essential for the history of events leading up to the War and to the Peace. As Dr. G. P. Gooch says in his Introductory Note, it contains the testimony of one who has seen a good deal of history in the making, and who at certain moments has helped to make it. Noel-Buxton was well known before the war among those unofficial groups who worked to avert the struggle, and, in the words of the author, "inspired by similar public-spirited motives persisted during the war in attempts to shorten the struggle by striving to promote negotiation on an honourable basis." For these reasons they were described by Sir Arthur Nicolson in 1912 as "pacifists, faddists and others in favour of close relations with Germany," and during the war by the Northcliffe press as promoters of peace-prattle and peace-chat. When war is either probable or actual, that is the invariable fate of anyone who attempts to save thousands of young men from premature death. The taunts are usually flung by people who have never known war, or are comfortably distant from the scenes of slaughter.

The narrative reveals much that will be new even to Noel-Buxton's friends as to his personal influence upon international affairs in the Balkans, Germany, France and the United States. With far-seeing discernment, he felt from the first that the root of future trouble lay in the animosities of the small nationalities of the Balkans, and in the ambitions of their neighbouring great Empires. The Balkans, their feuds, their dangers, and their sufferings were the evil heritage of centuries under Turkish misrule, and when he founded the Balkan Committee in 1904, his first object was to mitigate the Turkish persecution of the Bulgarians in Macedonia. The Great War has since fed us full of horrors, but in those days the miseries of the Macedonian Christians were enough to move the indignation of English people; for the Turkish method of establishing peace was in full blast with the destruction of villages (I counted 122 absolutely destroyed in the Monastir Vilayet alone, and that in the depth of winter), the murder of the men, the enslavement of the women and girls.

Nearly all these villagers were Bulgarian, and perhaps that terrible beginning has partly influenced the Balkan Committee towards the Bulgarian people. Not that Noel-Buxton and the rest of us were mistaken in our favour. Nearly everyone who knows the Balkans adopts one favourite race, and even the Serbs have found patrons, in spite of their successful iniquities. But though the Albanians are more attractive and picturesque, there is something solid, persistent, and, best of all, silent about the Bulgars which will raise them to be the leading race in the Balkans, subdued and exploited as they have been since, by our own stupid diplomacy, we failed to attach them to our side in the war. The story of that disastrous failure is fully narrated in these papers.

As we look back with the guidance of these public or private papers, we see how rapidly events followed each other, accumulating for the eruption of the war. We see the Young Turk revolution, the Austrian annexations, the Adana massacres, the Italian seizure of Tripoli, the two Balkan wars, Roumania's treachery, the shameful Treaty of Bucharest, the Servian Government's connivance at the Serajevo murders, and then the hideous consummation. And in all these events Noel-Buxton never ceased to follow out every possibility on agreement and conciliation. It was the same during the war itself, whether he was on mission to Bulgaria, Roumania (where he and his brother, Charles Roden, were shot by a would-be Turkish assassin) or to America to consult with President Wilson and Mr. House. From time to time his purpose was thwarted, now by the prejudices of our Foreign Office, now by that fatal suppression by Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith of our binding arrangement with France to aid her in case of war, and again by the insanity of the Coupon Election in 1918. But still he persevered for peace, having always the support of those courageous and self-sacrificing patriots, Arthur Ponsonby, Philip Snowden, E. D. Morel, and a few others.

The papers, both as diaries and letters, give us fine glimpses of many interesting and influential people. Here is Bourchier, that amazing *Times* correspondent in the Balkans, to whom the Balkan League was mainly due, the hero of Bulgaria, buried with State ceremony, the postage stamps marked with his head, but stone deaf and yet delighting in Bach, which he used to play to me late at night in his rooms at Sofia. And here is Clemenceau, cynical and pessimistic, but trusting to Kant's famous saying:

> "He had worked," he said, "in France for forty years for liberty, but the Frenchman's idea of liberty was suppressing everybody else. There were two things in the world worth admiring—our conscience and the starry heavens; it was worth coming into the world for these."

And here is Philip Howell, the youngest General, Chief of Staff in the Cavalry Corps in France, and then Chief of Staff in Salonika, where he devised a scheme for bringing Bulgaria round to the Allies, for, as he had written to Noel-Buxton months before, "With the Bulgar we'd get the Turk, the Dardanelles, and a fine firm base from which to take on other things." But just because he suggested terms of peace with the Bulgars late in 1915, popular clamour drove Asquith to recall him to a command in France, where he was killed—the one General who really knew the Balkans well. But so it always is in war-time. As Mr. Conwell-Evans says: "So vast a horror that few civilian minds could behold and comprehend it. The unmerciful bluntness of ordinary minds caused the spectacle to be emptied of its content, and substituted for it the cruel abstraction of moving lines and salients on a map."

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT?

What We Put in Prison. By G. W. PAILTHORPE. Williams and Norgate. 5s.

Recollections of a Prison Governor. By C. E. F. RICH. Hurst and Blackett. 18s.

At first sight these two books appear mutually antagonistic, but in essence they are complementary. Colonel Rich favours discipline—pronounced "Dissipperlin" as in the play *French Leave*—coupled with a generous helping hand for young and other redeemable offenders, while Dr. Pailthorpe studies the childhood and environment of her "patient," regarding delinquents as subjects for psychological treatment only—or at any rate in the first instance. The views of the first are based on thirty years' experience as a Governor and Deputy-Governor, and those of the latter on her inquiries, with Home Office benediction, into the cases of women in prisons and in Preventive and Rescue Homes, many of whom were apparently the victims of ignorant justices.

Her reports show insight and perseverance and the analyses are well argued, but her deductions are not always convincing. She endeavours, however, as far as suspicion of her motives and habitual deceit will permit, to break through the wall of reserve by which the prisoner is accustomed to defend herself. It may be that the erection of this wall is not always so unconscious as Dr. Pailthorpe suggests, but certainly it must be breached before curative methods can be tested. Prison environment is the very negation of confidence; prisoners are apt to regard outsiders as busybodies to whom one ought, in duty bound to oneself, to tell as much or as little as is consistent with the extension of privileges and favours. In order to give the psycho-analyst any chance of success, therefore, it would probably be necessary to draft offenders to their final destination through a clearing house, more like a hospital than a prison, where the atmosphere of assistance predominates over that of punishment. How many would ultimately pass on to the prison would be a measure of the success which psycho-analysts can develop in the treatment of social offenders.

Where Colonel Rich would do his best to give a deserving case a new start in life, Dr. Pailthorpe would first make full inquiries as to the predetermining causes of the original conviction and shape her assistance on the information she obtained. She is not so ready as the Colonel to take the world as she finds it—or even as it was thirty years ago—and recalls to our mind many social anachronisms which as propaganda need frequent repetition. For instance, she reminds us that it is wrong to punish prostitutes and to leave free those who demand them: that criminals are frequently misfits, whose misfortune is due to environment and upbringing: that fear of the Bobby round the corner is often as great a deterrent to crime as innate personal honesty: that inequality of punishment between individual prisoners is a serious grievance which should and could be avoided: and that in prison inactivity of mind, arising from inactivity of body, breeds excessive day-dreaming of a megalomaniac type, leading possibly to eventual mental aberration.

Colonel Rich in his apparent callousness towards the hardened criminal fails to appreciate that the community is frequently responsible for creating its own criminals. As a prison governor he is unable to show sympathy with them for their initial downwards step; but in neither book does it appear to be remembered that with a different social and economic order of life fewer offenders will be tempted to annoy their neighbours, and that those which remain will belong to the medical department rather than to that of the disciplinarian.

Colonel Rich considers our prison system was "the best in the world until the idealists messed it up"; he believes in the cat and capital punishment—the former chiefly for cases suitable for Dr. Pailthorpe—and generally asks the reader to regard him as a typical peppery old Colonel whose liver has been upset after an inspection of his prison by a juvenile upstart. But if he really wants us to believe this he should have condensed his book. He should have blue-pencilled such chapters as those portraying his genuine anxiety for the young offender, his fine work for those whom he considered worth helping, his loyalty to subordinates on all occasions—he thinks all prison staff are underpaid, governors included—and his great reforms at the original Borstal, even though some of the latter may be on principles we dislike. For of one thing we can be certain—had Colonel Rich been as blunt and callous as the views he expresses in his book, he would not have survived as a Governor into the nineteen-thirties, and would certainly not have gathered such a harvest of testimonials, not only from his subordinates, but actually from his own prisoners!

The chief difference between the two authors is that the Governor, no doubt naturally, would grade prisoners in batches, according to their sentences and previous convictions, while the psycho-analyst would grade offenders rather than offences: the one would do his best, single-handed or with the aid of recognised agencies, to help the youth and the redeemable; the other would see in each an individual needing individual treatment.

NEW TRAVEL BOOKS

South America. By KASIMIR EDSCHMID. Thornton Butterworth. 21s.

Laughing in the Jungle. By LOUIS ADAMIC. Harper. 12s. 6d.

Through the Kara Sea. By LEONARD MATTERS. Skeffington. 18s.

A Bacchic Pilgrimage. By ERNEST PEIXOTTO. Scribners. 8s. 6d.

A Wayfarer in Denmark. By GEORG BRÖCHNER. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

This Unknown Island. By S. P. B. MAIS. Putnam. 7s. 6d.

The High Lands of Britain. By S. P. B. MAIS. Richards. 7s. 6d.

The enthusiastic tourist is well catered for nowadays by the enterprising publisher. The latter appreciates that what is always something of an endurance test during the holiday is more readily undertaken from the depths of an armchair during the rest of the year. Travelling will always be popular even if the pleasure derived from it be mainly vicarious.

The most ambitious of the books on this list from the tourist's rather than from the explorer's point of view is Herr Edschmid's *South America*. Starting from the West Indies he examines successively the states on the Pacific side, crosses the Andes from Santiago to Buenos Aires by train, and travelling northward along the coast of Argentine and Brazil leaves the continent at Pernambuco. It will thus be seen that his interest lies wholly in the independent republics of South America, and not along that northern coast where the European colonies are established. He is more particularly concerned with what the intelligent tourist will easily discover for himself: that is to say the constitutional, political, and social problems encountered in the various states. He was armed with letters of introduction which makes his inquiry into these conditions somewhat authoritative, but the reader will feel at the end of the book that his idea of South America is little altered in the rough though it may be in detail—in statistical detail. The present reviewer, at least, would gladly have forgone the schoolroom knowledge (that Chile has a coastline of 2,500 miles, that there are 450 *gauchos* to every 100,000 acres of pasture in Argentina) for a trip down the Amazon or a chapter on the Pampas. The photographs which illustrate the book are fascinating—particularly that of Rio de Janeiro.

Leaving the southern portion of the Americas we visit the United States in the company of Mr. Adamic, a one-time Bohunk immigrant. This book comes under no known category. *Laughing in the Jungle* is an autobiography, a travel book, and a novel. The author tells us of his life from very early days in Yugoslavia when his village was part of the Austrian Empire, until 1929—just before the world-wide financial collapse. He has been "most everything" including a soldier in the U.S.A. army during the war, and has consistently kept his ears and eyes open. About those parts of American life with which he has not come into direct contact he informs us under the guise of biographical sketches of his acquaintance. It is these portions of his book which give it a novel-like appearance. And it is a travel book in so far as he has been all over the U.S.A. looking for work, any sort of work, from helping to edit a Bohunk paper to road-mending. It is a book which English readers interested in America will find very readable.

Mr. Matters, as revealed in his *Through the Kara Sea*, is not one of those many travellers to the Soviets whose sojourn has been jaundiced by the discomforts they have experienced. He did not, it is true, have to travel continuously from one town to another inspecting a model crèche in each, nor did he have to wait day after day in Rostov for a guide who had been sent from Vladivostok to show him the town. But he, too, had his troubles. He went on a cargo boat along the new trade route which the Russians have opened up through the Kara Sea to Igarka. He lived there in a communal hut with other birds of passage.

> We slept on plank beds with mattresses of shavings. The rooms were usually uncomfortably hot, despite the constant opening of the outer door by the coming and the going of the tenants of the hut. Not a window could be opened, and as everybody who came in by day or by night felt it incumbent upon him to shove more wood in the stove we might have been stifled but for the automatic ventilation of the place by the ever-swinging, creaking outer door.

He survived suffocation and other horrors, and returns with a most favourable and interesting account of the new Arctic port of Igarka, which is mainly concerned with the exportation of timber. Mr. Matters once and for all completely denies the story of the work being done by forced labour. After reading this book, which is soberly written, one is left with nothing but admiration for a government which has planned and is carrying through a scheme for developing the huge unproductive territories of Siberia.

From the frozen wastes of the north Mr. Peixotto conducts us on a tour of the wine provinces of France. *A Bacchic Pilgrimage* is a wine taster's guide book *par excellence*: but as it is not written in technical language the amateur may glean much knowledge and many useful hints from a perusal of its pages—even though the reverence with which Mr. Peixotto treats his subject may sometimes make him smile. The book is far from being a mere catalogue of wines. The history, the processes of growing and storing, and an expert criticism of each wine are included in the contents, together with some careful pen drawings by the author.

A Wayfarer in Denmark can be recommended as a complementary travelling companion to Baedeker. Mr. Bröchner is as detailed as he can be considering the handy size of the volume, and finds space to touch upon the history, manners, and aesthetic triumphs of a country too little known to the English. There are many admirable photographs to illustrate the text.

Mr. Mais is well known to the listening public for his talks on the English countryside. In *This Unknown Island* he publishes in book form the seventeen broadcasts which he recently delivered on this subject. "If, after each of the talks, listeners did not want to rush off at once and explore the district through which I had just rushed, I had failed entirely in my purpose." Readers now have the same opportunities as listeners for pleasing or disappointing the author.

The High Lands of Britain, also by Mr. Mais, is a sequel to *This Unknown Island*, with the reservation that it is likely to appeal especially to the mountaineering section of the public. Both books are well illustrated with photographs.

LIVES AND WORKS

Sir James Guthrie. By SIR JAMES L. CAW. Macmillan. £5 5s.

Sir William Orpen. By SIDNEY DARK and P. G. KONODY. Seeley, Service. 25s.

Characteristics of French Art. By ROGER FRY. Chatto and Windus. 12s. 6d.

A Painter's Baggage. By WALTER BAYES, R.W.S. Medici Society. 6s.

The piety of his friends has raised an impressive monument to Sir James Guthrie. Sir D. J. Cameron has contributed the foreword, and Mr. Frank Rinder and Dr. John Warrack have added supplementary notes dealing with the artist's work and personality respectively, while Messrs. Annan and Sons have furnished excellent reproductions in photogravure. But the chief task, which was evidently a labour of love, has fallen upon Sir James Caw. He has traced with care, and without unnecessary flourish, the progress of a distinguished career. From early youth Guthrie was destined to be a painter, and it is not too much to say that he was destined also to be the President of the Royal Scottish Academy. He had all the necessary qualities—Scottish patriotism, managerial capacity, charm, tact, and very considerable proficiency in his art. His life is not exciting reading, though he was a revolutionary in his day, and later steered the Academy through an awkward period of its existence. His intensities he shared with his work alone ; to his friends he offered a cordial and delightful, yet always rather reticent, contact. The portraits of Scottish worthies and the large group, *Some Statesmen of the Great War*, in the National Portrait Gallery, are impressive and successful pieces of work, conceived after Velasquez and with affinity to Sargent, but without the flashy slickness of the latter. The even narrative and discriminating eulogy of Sir James Caw is altogether appropriate to its subject. He has produced a worthy tribute and a valuable record of a phase of Scottish art.

Messrs. Dark and Konody's Life of Sir William Orpen is a less austere book, just as Orpen was a less austere character than Guthrie. To both the authors, who were his friends, he revealed himself readily, and they happily unite in giving the impression of a very attractive and human personality. But Mr. Dark has an inkling of shadowed depths beyond the ready access and high spirits. Speaking of the popularity of Orpen's work after the war, he says, " I do not think it is to be denied that, to an increasing extent, the success was a Dead Sea apple in his mouth. As I understand him, Orpen was a man who wanted something from life with all the intensity of his vivid personality. I do not believe that he ever quite knew what that something was, but whatever it was I am quite sure that he never found it." Despite his triumphs, Orpen's was a tragic destiny. Mr. Dark traces his nervous unrest to the profound effect of the war upon a character hitherto carefree and optimistic. The sights which Orpen witnessed in the course of the struggle filled him with horror ; his contact, as an official artist, with the peacemakers roused him to disgust, and it is to his lasting credit that he expressed those feelings in his work. Ironically enough, his very success as a portrait painter contributed to the emotional tension. Mr. Konody, who deals more exclusively and very ably with the work, supplements Mr. Dark when he says of Orpen's later period : " The conditions of mass production forced him almost to abandon artistic experiments and turn out the clichés that his sitters expected from him." It was perhaps his own art, as well as life, that had something to do with the dissatisfaction which Mr. Dark reveals, and we may regret that a too ready yielding to the call for portraits obstructed the freer exercise of his undoubted gifts which might have relieved the strain. In any case, the authors of the biography have captured the salient characteristics of both the man and the work.

Mr. Fay's estimate of French art is a swift but well-proportioned survey. He indulges in no controversy and breaks no new ground, unless it be in exalting Géricault at the expense of Delacroix. He finds time, too, to expose the absurdity of those extreme Freudians who see art entirely as wish-fulfilment, and the stupidity of the Bolsheviks in decreeing that art must henceforth be cubist. The book is an admirable introduction to the Louvre. Mr. Bayes, with pleasant garrulity, records a sketching holiday in Venice and Dalmatia. He knocks another nail in the coffin of the passport system, but, alas ! there is never a corpse inside.

T. W. EARP.

AN OLD ENGLISH PARSON

Old Oak, The Story of a Forest Village. By the late REV. J. E. LINNELL. Constable. 7s. 6d.

The forest village is, or rather was, Silverstone (pronounced Silston) on the edge of the ancient Whittlebury Forest, in Northamptonshire, now a forest no more, for it was, in the middle of last century, murderously thinned, and Whittlebury Park cut out of it. Such, alas ! is the common doom of forests in this land-stealing country of ours. These records of it were made by a man born and bred there, the Rev. J. E. Linnell, who died in 1919 at the age of seventy-six, a sturdy, militant parson of the old school, of whom his son supplies an attractive memoir. A fine old English yeoman he was, unclerical in outlook, ready with his fists, afraid of no man, the friend of gypsies, tramps and prize-fighters, endlessly good to the poor and oppressed, dispensing generous hospitality to all and sundry, and without respect of caste, so that generals and privates, squires and villagers would find themselves at his table together ; if they didn't like it, said he, they needn't come. He hated ceremony and clericalism, and spurned the cassock, though advised that it trebled the life of a pair of trousers. His faith was a sturdy evangelicalism, and he thought ill both of High Anglicanism and Dissent. A good *raconteur*, he tells his tales of a bygone English life with zestful vigour. Some of them are grim tales enough, of poachings, fightings, hangings and murders (the hangings were as often for killing deer as men). The England of our ancestors had its merits, but was, even so late as the early nineteenth century, of a frightening savagery. But there are plenty of gay tales, too, such as that of the Mistress of Stowe, who was reputed to have lost one night after dinner £20,000 over racing maggots across the dinner-table, and of the sound churchman who held Dissent in such abhorrence that he knocked down his daughter for attending a Methodist meeting, since " no daughter of his was going to profane the Sabbath by mixing with a lot of Methodies, if he knew it. What did it say in the Old Book ? On this Rock will I found my Church, and there's nary a word from fust to last 'bout any damned meetin' house."

Village life in those days was lively with religious, political, personal and poaching feuds. The old parson's jottings jog on happily from one reminiscence to another, rambling over a century of memories and of transmitted legends. A robust militarist patriot, he ends on a plaint that times have changed, and that our rulers appear to envisage no future wars. The League of Nations would not approve him ; but he is in line with the old English yeomen of the days of our forbears, when the forest folk were " a fierce upstanding race," and the clergy worthy of them. Though indeed there was nothing fierce about this kindly, friendly, sporting parson.

SHORTER NOTICES

The History of the Bow Street Runners, 1729-1829. By GILBERT ARMITAGE. Wishart. 12s. 6d.

The scope of Mr. Armitage's book is a good deal wider than its title suggests. It might be described as a history of the Bow Street police court, from its establishment by Sir Thomas de Veil, the Westminster Justice who set up house there in the early eighteenth century, or of the evolution of the policing of London down to the date of Peel's great measure of reform. It is also a lively repertory of stories of crime and public disturbances. Mr. Armitage has ransacked contemporary pamphlets and periodicals for obscurer instances of men's villainy or lawlessness, and introduces us to some very entertaining rascals. The career of Charles Price, or " Old Patch," for instance, would furnish a picaresque novelist with magnificent material. The whole is a lively picture of the seamy side of London life in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—most appropriately dedicated to one bearing the name of Hogarth—and if it is packed with villainy it also displays some shining examples both of sagacity and of humanity, the two virtues being most conspicuously combined in the persons of the two Fieldings, the great novelist and his blind half-brother, rather a touchy gentleman but a prince among magistrates.

Thomas Johnson: Botanist and Royalist. By H. WALLIS KEW and H. E. POWELL. Longmans. 8s. 6d.

As an essay in constructive research this little book is a model in its kind. Its subject, who stands high among the fathers of the science of botany, was well worth the minute pains which the authors have bestowed on him ; but he did not make their task any the easier by bearing so common a name. Johnson's reputation, however, is securely based on his edition of Gerard's *Herball* and his work as a field naturalist, in which he was a pioneer. Had he lived longer there is little doubt that he would have been as conspicuous a figure in the history of science as John Ray. But the Civil War interrupted his useful labours, he enlisted in the King's service, played a gallant part in the heroic defence of Basing House, and lost his life there in early middle age. Of this last episode in his career his biographers give an admirable and carefully documented account ; and though, for the rest, their book will appeal mainly to botanists, from its austerely unembroidered pages an attractive figure emerges.

Three Meet. By ANTHONY BERTRAM. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

If Mr. Bertram had made it clearer what exactly he set out to do in *Three Meet*, it would have been a better book. We have Christopher Quin's story, and the story of Adam Casteel and Joan Usborne : these two converge entirely by accident, and if that converging served any purpose at all Mr. Bertram has not made it sufficiently clear to be easily apprehended. Christopher, indeed, goes out of the book as casually as he entered it, having suffered a third disillusionment in the meantime, and indulged in much not very profound meditation on the subject of death. One feels that if Christopher had not been provided with an adequate unearned income, he might have overcome his instability of character and saved himself much unhappiness, since he would have had less time for ineffectual philosophising. Adam Casteel, by far the most interesting person in the book, is dealt with all too briefly The story is full of promising beginnings which never come to anything, and breaks off completely at the most promising point of all. There is, nevertheless, an atmosphere of sincerity and truth about the book, and the least discerning reader cannot doubt that Mr. Bertram has something of importance to say ; but, unfortunately, he does not succeed in disclosing what that something is.

The Sailor's Nelson. By ADMIRAL MARK KERR. Hurst and Blackett. 18s.

Admiral Kerr's forthright appreciation shows us how our greatest seaman appeared to his contemporaries, to those under whom he served, and to those who served under him, as the most lovable and beloved of men, and also how invariably sound were his strategy and tactics. Admiral Kerr declares that "it is a curious trait in the character of our people that they appear to admire brilliant mistakes," and there can be little question that the popular idea of the "Nelson Touch" is a headlong, bulldog, unintelligent dashing into danger and damning the consequence. If this book demonstrates to all who believe that silly myth its essential silliness, then it will have served its purpose. We are spared a detailed account of the Lady Hamilton affair, and what little the Admiral has to say of it is entirely sensible and to the point. For the rest, while the bulk of the book is based upon material already published, it is to be welcomed as an excellent popular appreciation of Nelson.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

COMBINING an irreligious upbringing with a congenital dislike for jollity in music I am hardly the person to review "Christmas records." Those, however, who like to look at the Middle Ages through nineteenth-century spectacles obviously like to, and it would be a cheerless task to dissuade them, a work of supererogation to encourage them. Others, who have survived a neurasthenic Christmas and look forward to a grisly New Year, may find themselves more attracted by H.M.V.'s just issued *Connoisseurs' Album of Hot Rhythm Music*. I'm afraid that this series hardly lives up to expectations. It resembles to some extent those ports that are described as being "for the connoisseur or convalescent."

Far from giving us the *frisson* we may legitimately expect from such a title this album is all too reminiscent of what we can hear in any night club or cinema, and it is doubtful if any of these records would cause much sensation if issued in the ordinary way. Several of the records are merely rearrangements of familiar tunes (*Rocking Chair*, *Tiger Rag*, etc.) that have already been presented to us in decidedly more brilliant versions. Moreover, there are far too many records with vocal refrains. One of the blessings of the so-called "hot" style of jazz is that it has dispensed with the old verse and refrain (or "burden") type of record. Nearly all the best modern jazz records are free from the tyranny of the lyricist, and it is disappointing to find that most of this series is devoted to songs of the *Nine little miles from Ten-Ten-Tennessee* order. Even the purely orchestral numbers make too much use of that tiresome and overworked device, the imitation vocal refrain (in which a human voice imitates a brass instrument with a mute imitating a human voice). Six out of the twenty sides are devoted to Duke Ellington, whose records always have a certain distinction and virtuosity, but none, I fear, are on the same level of interest as his earlier tunes, such as *Mood Indigo* or *The Mooche*. It may be that the best of Ellington's recent records have not been issued over here, or it may be that he is forced to spend too much time putting frills round other people's tunes to be able to develop his own very decided gifts as a composer.

I do not want to seem unduly damping about this Connoisseurs' Album. There is not one of these records which would not make an admirable background to conversation, alcohol, and intrigue (amorous or political). But speaking from the admittedly snooty point of view of the connoisseur the only one I can wholeheartedly recommend to listen to in a cold-blooded fashion is Mr. Thomas ("Fats") Waller's rendering of his own two virtuoso pieces, *Handful of Keys* and *Numb Fumblin'*, Nos. 13 and 14 in the series. (B 4347).

* * *

English musicians only seem to appreciate French music at its most romantic and exotic (as in Berlioz or Debussy), and a composer like Gabriel Fauré, who is the quintessence of the French tradition, enjoys hardly more than a *succès d'estime* in this country.

His music has a cool, aristocratic distinction, however slight it may be in conception, and one can always admire the smoothness with which he presents his often remarkably original harmonic style, the technical dexterity with which he just avoids the easy grooves of French sentiment. His incidental music to Haraucourt's *Shylock* is of no great moment, but is executed with extraordinary taste and skill. It is enthralling technically, though hardly emotionally. (French, H.M.V. two 10in. D.A. 4823–4. The Conservatoire orchestra under Piero Coppola).

* * *

Sibelius' 4th Symphony in A minor is the least well known in the concert hall, but by those who have made a study of his music it is generally considered his finest work. The extreme austerity both of mood and texture and the complete lack of opportunities for display have combined to make this symphony unpopular with the prima-donna conductor. It is all the more surprising, then, to find that this record is made by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. To do Stokowski justice, he seems on this occasion to have completely subordinated his mannerisms to a very just presentation of the work. The playing, of course, is superb, though I could wish that the wood-wind were not quite so refined. I like plenty of sex-differentiation between the wood-wind and find that the over-sweet vibrato of the Philadelphia oboes and bassoons has something of the epicene timbre

1933!

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of a cinema organ. It robs many of the passages in this symphony of their essential coldness. Sibelius's scoring with its concentration on the lower registers and its use of harmonic clashes on such "unphotogenic" instruments as timpani and double bass presents peculiar difficulties in recording. There is no doubt that these records are technically speaking by far the best we have had. It is a little difficult to review them in detail without a score, and mine has been lent to a succession of friends. I was struck, though, by the excellent balance between wood-wind and strings, particularly in those passages where low flutes and bassoons have somewhat enigmatic sustained notes against a rapid figuration on the strings. The microphone fails us on only two occasions. Once at the beginning, where we cannot hear the lower part of the divided bass ostinato (there should be a low F and E forming sevenths and ninths with the upper part), and once on the penultimate side, where the tubular bells fail to give us a clear top note in the climax where the effect should be C, D, E, D, C, D, E, etc. The top E sounds like a rather fusty C and destroys the important thematic connection of the phrase.

Making allowances for these two blemishes, this is an excellent recording of what is undoubtedly one of the few masterpieces of our times. These records are an essential supplement to the Sibelius Society albums (Victor, four 12in. 7683–6).

CONSTANT LAMBERT.

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

Third Series, No. 2.—BIG GAME.

Extract from letter from Lady Blanche Hyena in M'Bangaland :

" We had a big game shoot yesterday. The other three guns were Lord Giraffe, Mr. Gnothing Gnu, and Rear-Admiral Lion.

" Our bag included Lion, Giraffe, Gnu and Hyena. To give the day a competitive interest, we awarded so many points for each Lion bagged, so many for each Giraffe, and so on. They ranked in descending order as above.

" It was difficult deciding what points to give for a Lion. No one, except Mr. Gnu, has so far bagged a single one !

" Eighteen points in all were scored. I scored the fewest, though I bagged most beasts ! The Admiral and I between us scored the same total of points as the other two.

" Among us, by the way, we bagged three Gnu."

How many beasts in all were shot by their own namesakes ?

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM-SOLVERS.

One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of a correct solution, selected at random.

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Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this address not later than Tuesday, January 10th.

No. 22.—SELLING SWEEP.

Grabbe bought 87 tickets.

This problem has produced an impressive display of mathematical knowledge. It is also easily solved by trial and error.

No. 21.—DAUGHTERS OF BLUE STOCKING.

The award of prizes is held over till next week, owing to the intervention of the Christmas holidays. My promised discussion of the solution is also held over.

PLAYTIME DINNER.

Arundel Hotel, Arundel Street, W.C.2, on Wednesday, January 11th, at 7.30 for 8. *Morning dress.* Problem and Crossword solvers, *and their wives and friends,* are cordially invited. Mr. Kingsley Martin will preside.

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WEEK-END PROBLEMS BOOK.—Particulars have now been despatched to all solvers whose addresses I have.

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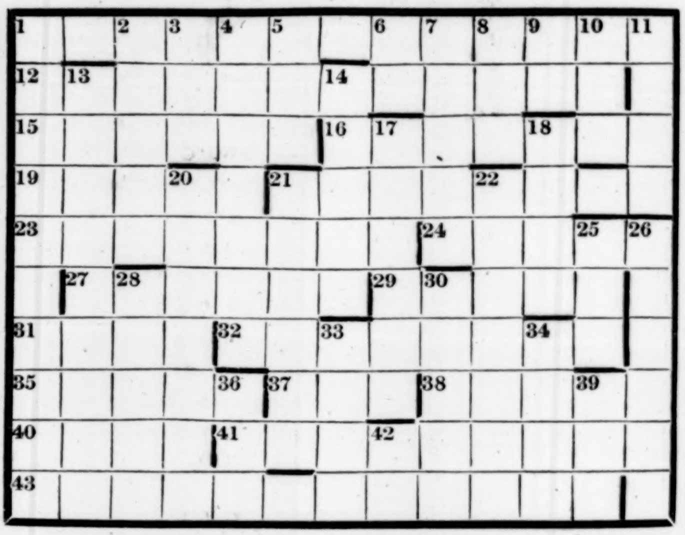
TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



CLUE GARDENS

ACROSS.

1. The chess expert who could neither win nor lose.
12. Scrooge's activities were not, but they became so.
15. Glove or girdle.
16. Unusual in a steamboat.
19. Egg-moulding.
21. They become orthodox when they're dead.
23. Haunts of vole and kingfisher.
24 *rev.* A doubtful plural, both philosophically and numismatically.
27. Lies longest in the ground.
29. The best teeth.
31. Novice emerging from the hubbub.
32. Friendly with a rock in it.
35. Splashed pigment.
37. Your middle name, Madam.
38. See 33.
40. Seed deriving from fruit.
41. Hooting, not necessarily in Tooting.
43. A crime in cross-word composition.

DOWN.

1. Often " interior " people.
2. Pose a backwards narrator.
3. Propitious weather for arks.
4. Country, curtailed and in confusion.
5. We seek the prodigal's return.
6. Country without inflammation.
7. Edna's range.
8. Grievous beginning of cruelty.
9. A Bishop is, often.
10. With 25, found in potatoes.
11. County and town.
13. Having reference to Mosaic law.
14. Weapon from the plural of 40.
17. Mountain tobacco.
18. Munchausen, for instance.
20 *rev.* Modern equivalent of mandragora.
21. Wint'ry.
22. Torn up writing-pad.
25. See 10.
26. Back-answer.
28. Hero of the world's most famous palindrome.
30. Almost empty.
33 *rev.* Absurd before 38.
34. A daughter of the soil, perhaps.
36. Tinge.
39 *rev.* The coin that begins a smile.
42. They've robbed my fruit of me.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD.

ACROSS.—1. horrent. 6. douche. 11. orator. 14. uranium. 16. Rameses. 17. orient. 19. Orange. 20. swallow. 23. gi. 24. ivory *rev.* 26. stlani (Stalin). 29. Ruabon. 31. citizen. 32. am (père). 33. union *rev.* 36. N.R.A. 37. oak. 39. pa. 41. axle. 42. lei. 43. inn *rev.* 44. he. 45. hyena. 46. ass *rev.* 47. ire. 48. Orrery *rev.* 49. R.S. 50. tacks.

DOWN.—1. horography. 2. orarium. 3. Ramayana. 4. cosgo (goose). 5. tussicular. 6. drowsiness. 7. oar. 8. ciel. 9. hun. 10. em. 12. ten. 13. reevn (never). 15. nil. 18. twinkles. 21. attrist. 22. one. 25. R.B. 27. liana. 28. azonic. 30. oiler. 34. oxy—. 35. neno (none). 38. air. 40. aer. 45. he.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

JOBBING BACKWARDS—AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTS—SOUTH AFRICAN £

AT the year's end it is always amusing, and sometimes instructive, to "job backwards." It is somewhat surprising to find that the *average* investor in Great Britain last year could hardly have escaped making a profit. Not only was there a lively boom in gilt-edged stocks and, indeed, in all fixed-interest securities not suspected of a "trade risk," but British industrial shares, according to the *Financial News* index, enjoyed a 10 per cent. rise from December, 1931, to December, 1932, or a 30 per cent. rise from the low point of June 1st to the high point of November 9th. I estimate that the speculative investor, blessed with more than the average luck, could have made a capital profit of something like 100 per cent. Distrustful of a business recovery at the beginning of the year and impressed by the possibilities of a "cheap money" boom in British Government funds—Bank rate falling rapidly and money becoming not only cheap but plentiful—he would have bought 3 per cent. Local Loans at 60½ and sold out at the climax of the conversion operations (in November) at, say, 90¾. Thus, our imaginary speculator would have turned, say, £2,000 in eleven months into £3,000 with very little risk. But being an intelligent operator he would not have been content to bask in the sunshine of a Government conversion operation. In June he would have had a fling in equity shares. There was no sign at that time of any trade recovery, but he would have argued rightly that cheap money would overflow from the fixed-interest into the equity share markets as soon as there was some favourable news to set things going. The Lausanne Agreement proved to be the "kick-off." Both commodities and securities responded quickly with quite absurd hopes of international action to end the slump. Accepting the popular belief that America had better chances of recovery than Great Britain, he would have borrowed £1,000 on the security of his 3 per cent. Local Loans and bought American equity shares on June 30th when the Dow Jones industrial index stood at 42.8. By the end of August he would have sold out when the index stood at 79.8. Thus he would have paid back his £1,000 loan and put £867 besides in his pocket. If he had been devilishly clever on the war debts crisis he would have realised that only Germany stood to gain and he would have invested £1,000 in Berlin 6 per cent. at 50 at the end of last month and sold out on New Year's Eve at 63. The total profit for the year on £2,000, excluding loan charges and exchange profits, would have been £2,127, or 106 per cent.

* * *

"Jobbing backwards" in this fashion is perhaps not in the best taste. I might have recounted the more dismal story of how an investor, after mature consideration, had bought the preference stocks of the London, Midland and Scottish and London and North-Eastern Railway, because he believed in Sir Josiah Stamp, the National Government and tariffs, and had argued that if the heavy industries did not pull round, Great Britain would inevitably be doomed and Government stocks become worthless. This patriot would have suffered a capital loss in the year of from 30 to 50 per cent. But I will give the sober record of the indices to show how the *average* investor really fared:

	Dec. 31, 1931.	June 30, 1932.	Dec. 23. 1932.
20 Fixed-interest Stocks*	91.7	111.0	123.7
30 Industrial "Equities"†	59.9	54.0	65.9
404 American Equities‡	55.3	32.8	49.1

* *Financial News* Index (1928 = 100) including British Government, municipal, public board, railway and industrial debentures.

† *Financial News* Index, 1928 = 100.

‡ *Standard Statistics* Index (1926 = 100) including 337 industrials, 33 rails, and 34 utilities.

* * *

It is not only the rentiers and speculators who have done well out of the stock markets this year. The Dominion Governments have much to be thankful for. In particular Australia, which has seen the market valuation of its credit improve from a range between 6½ and 7½ per cent. to one between 4 per cent. and 5 per cent., should bless the year of the great conversion. Appropriately enough, it was Joseph Chamberlain who brought Colonial stocks into the trustees list and his son's conversion operations which brought Australian stocks back to trustee yields. Yet the trade risk remains, and until wheat and wool prices have risen, say, 25 per cent. above their present levels I would not regard the Australian balance of payments as assured. The first three months (July to September) of the Australian financial year have disclosed a surplus of imports over exports of £1,765,000 as against an export surplus of nearly £2,000,000 in the corresponding period of 1931–32. This has followed upon a reduction in certain import duties, which has naturally stimulated the import trade. The export season promises to be good, but even if the volume of exports reaches the record of 1931–32 (£75,000,000), imports could not be maintained at the present rate of £60,000,000 a year without causing trouble. Allowing for the export of current gold production (£4,000,000 a year), the Commonwealth Government would have only £19,000,000 to meet an external debt service of £29,000,000. There is no immediate cause for alarm in this situation. The Australian Government is unique in being willing to take the advice of its economists. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that if the balance of payments were to become seriously endangered the economists would advise, and the Government would put into effect, a lowering of the exchange rate. Since December, 1931, the exchange has been fixed at £125 Australian per £100 London. A return to the former rate of 130 per cent. is likely to be considered. For the time being Australian balances in London are ample for all requirements. The commercial banks, under the pooling arrangement, pay into the London office of the Commonwealth Bank £2½ millions a month to cover the public debt service. The real test for debt-ridden Australia will come when the spell of good export seasons has been broken.

* * *

On October 22nd, I was pointing out that the Kaffir market had just discounted, on the basis of the sterling dividend yields, the rise in the sterling price of gold, but had not yet discounted the probability that South Africa would be forced to devalue her gold currency. Devaluation of the South African pound, with no complications, would increase the life of the Rand and stimulate the development of all low-grade properties. But complications may arise. The mines may incur extra taxation. There may be a rise in wages. Some part of the gold premium, in the event of devaluation, will no doubt be retained, but will the resulting increase in profits fully offset the decline in the sterling amount of dividend? A fall in the prices of the high-grade, dividend-paying shares may be seen.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

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Sunday, January 1st, at 11 a.m.
S. K. RATCLIFFE,
HOPES AND FEARS FOR 1933.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL SOCIETY, The Studio, 158a Mill Lane, N.W.6.
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